

12. D.D.
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A
C O U R S E
O F
S E R M O N S,
U P O N
DEATH, || HEAVEN, and
JUDGMENT, || HELL.

B Y
JOHN WHITAKER, B. D. *K*
RECTOR OF RUAN LANYHORNE, CORNWALL.

L O N D O N:
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MDCCLXXXIII.

35



MUSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND
Dr. JOHN ROSS,
LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

BE pleased, my Lord, to accept
a copy of the following Ser-
mons. They were written origi-
nally for the use of my parishoners.
And they are published now, with
the view of recommending a change
in the structure of compositions for
the pulpit, and with the hope of pro-
moting the cause of our common
Christianity.

I have long, my Lord, considered the prevailing form of our pulpit-addresses, as little calculated to do good, as founded upon wrong principles, and directed to wrong ends. I thought them so, at my first entrance upon the Clerical Office. Experience has since confirmed what Speculation surmised. And I wish much to see a reformation begun, in this leading point of Ministerial Conduct,

The genius of our nation has been repeatedly remarked to have a stronger tincture of phlegm in it, than that of our immediate neighbours to the South. This ruling bias of our temper we may trace, if we please, with an author of more celebrity than merit*, to the nature of our climate; and so build up an hypothesis, that

* Montesquieu.

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is directly contradicted by facts. We may therefore refer it, with a more philosophical conjecture, to the well-known incidents of our history; to that large transfusion of German blood into our veins, which was made at the settlements of the Saxons and Danes among us. But these, or any other, schemes of accounting mechanically for the discriminating temperament of kingdoms, are all, I am convinced, chimerical and vain, fabricated merely by the fanciful part of our understanding, and rejected by the severer the moment it examines them strictly. The different characters of nations result from the same principle, as the different characters of individuals; from those deep and strong lineaments of soul, which are impressed upon it at first by the hand of its Almighty Former. He has thrown a shade of

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thoughtfulness into the original texture of the Romans, the Italians, the Spaniards, the Germans, and the English; while he has dressed up the ancient Athenians, and the present French, with a mixture of livelier colours. And he has done both, no doubt, for those mysterious purposes of his Providence, for which he so wonderfully diversifies the personal tempers of men, and which can be comprehended only by the ALL-WISE MIND that suggested them. But, whatever is the cause of our phlegm, the effect is too obvious not to be seen by foreigners, and too powerful not to be felt by ourselves. And it has had a particular influence upon the Sermons of the island.

This native seriousness of spirit is perhaps the properest soil, for all the great and sublime in public life, in literature,

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literature, and in religion. But then it necessarily takes its direction from a variety of external causes. The military constitution of Rome, and the military establishments of the Feudal ages, threw it wholly into war at first. For many centuries it expended itself, amongst the Romans and all their kindred nations of modern times, in deeds of sanguinary heroism. Its progress in literature, therefore, was very slow. And, what appears surprising on a review of its literary advances among ourselves, even our poetry, and even our tragic and epic poetry, was carried to a very high degree of excellence; at a time when our histories were saddened over with the veil of dulness, and when our sermons were buried in the clouds and mists of it. But that long course of prosperity, which exalted our island to

such a wonderful pitch of power, riches, and glory, has naturally operated to lend a new spring to the spirits, and to breathe a new life into the literature, of the whole. Those middle strains of poetry, which dignified the names of their writers eighty or a hundred years ago, are now reached by almost every ingenious school-boy in the kingdom. Even history has lately been written with a vivacity and a forcibleness, that were never known among us before, and raise us equal to the ancients. And our Sermons are the only compositions, which have shared but little in the growing sprightliness of the nation, and still stand at a distance from the ancient oratory.

For nearly a century after the Reformation, the church-discourses of our country seem to have been the dullest

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driest and the dullest addressees, that were ever made to a popular assembly. A poor play upon words, a mere splitting of hairs, an involution of divisions within divisions, quotations from the Vulgate translation, quotations from the Greek original, quotations from the Scholiast upon the latter, all minced and carved in the most fantastical fashions, make up the body, and the soul too, of the celebrated compositions among them *. They are particularly stiffened over with the ice of scholastic learning. A polar frost reigns throughout. And one cannot but pity the people, who were to derive so much of their inspiriting warmth in religion, from such a freezing power. Only the feelings of the people, I suppose, were in a just proportion to the spirits of their preachers. And

* Bishop Andrews's, &c.

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the state of religion at the time, perhaps, required more of the light of instruction, than of the fire of exhortation.

In this dead style of our Sermons, a new mode was adopted by the Dissenters. Enthusiasm now did in religion; what Genius had done in poetry before. It stimulated the sober spirits of the nation into the liveliest exertions. It even did this, with an additional load upon them from the gloomy heresy of Calvinism. And a warm, impassioned kind of oratory prevailed universally in the conventicle. It there wrought wonderful effects. It thundered, and it lightened, in its own element of turbulence. It carried the common people along with it. It hurried them into schism, sedition, and rebellion. It sent them in arms against
their

DEDICATION. xi

their sovereign with “ a controuling
“ horreur on their spirits *.” And
it terminated its career at last, in the
subversion of our church and mo-
narchy.

This dreadful evidence of the
power of the pulpit, when directed
to engage the passions and to agitate
the soul, should have carried convic-
tion with it to the minds of the na-
tion. It should have induced the
Clergy, especially, to pursue the
conduct of the Dissenting Teachers
on a better plan, to catch a portion
of their fire, and to present it at the
real altars of religion. But so little
is the human understanding influ-
enced by reason, that the very suc-
cess of those Teachers prevented
any imitation of them. They had

* Lord Clarendon, from the confession of
some of them.

abused

abused the natural energy of the pulpit. They had turned it into an instrument of distraction to the nation. They had swept reason and religion before it. And therefore the preaching of the Clergy went on, pretty nearly in its ancient manner*.

Yet the temper of the kingdom brightening up in the sunshine of the Restoration, and a freer vivacity pervading all ranks and orders of men; the genius of the pulpit began to throw off many of its clogs, and to move with greater briskness there. The dull disquisition concerning the versions of the text, the drawling concatenation of it with the context, and the enormous drag-chain of divisions; nearly all the formality, and actually all the pedantry; were laid

* See some of Dr. Adam Littleton's Sermons, &c.

aside by degrees. The sight of a sovereign, lively, shrewd, and witty, and the presence of a court formed by his example, and sharing in his spirit, introduced the reformation first at the fountain head, I think, and carried it from thence through the kingdom. And a vein of good-sense, just criticisms upon Scripture, and manly observations on life, began to take place in the pulpit. This was the grand æra of emancipation to the oratory of the church. It has accordingly been celebrated as such by the voice of the public. And the Sermons of TILLOTSON, particularly, have been long considered as patterns for all succeeding writings. But common opinions seldom are critically just upon literary subjects. The first great change, which is happily effected in any public conduct, is marked by every eye,
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and applauded by every tongue; while the improvements, which are afterwards made upon that change, rarely catch the attention of the many, however important. And the Sermons of TILLOTSON, I may venture to assert, have been exceeded in all their characteristic excellencies, by a variety of discourses since. We have even had some lately, which in elegance of language, in delicacy of sentiment, and in deep insight into the windings of the human heart, are superiour, I believe, to those of any other age or nation*.

In this state of the national preaching, however, we are far, very far from perfection. This may seem a bold censure upon the taste of our preachers, and the judgment of their

* Dr. Blair's.

admirers.

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admirers. But it is not a rash one, I hope. And bold censures are always necessary to the production of reformatations. We are yet, I repeat therefore, very far from perfection in the present state of preaching among us. We have a large portion of the national phlegm still presiding over the pulpit. And our addresses from thence are almost as little calculated at present, to win the heart, to captivate the passions, and to compel men into religion; as ever they were, even in the driest and dullest periods of our church-eloquence. That some, that several of our later Sermons do indeed touch the string of the affections at times, it would be unjust to deny. But that they touch it frequently, that they touch it powerfully, that they sink deep into it, so as to make it vibrate strongly to the heart and soul; it would be more unjust

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unjust to allow. Some of them speak with a gentle and transitory feelingness to our passions. And the generality of them never speak at all.

That infinite multiplicity of Sermons, which have issued from the press within the last fifty years, are purely didactic in their plan, and merely sentimental in their execution. They are all of them didactic, from the radical coldness of our national spirit. And they are some of them sentimental lately, from the more airy and philosophizing taste of the times. But they are not affectionate. They are not impassioned. They "play round the head, but come not to the heart." Or, if they sometimes come to it, they reach it not in those strong strokes, in those deep and awful gashes, which constitute the very essence of effective

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tive oratory, and which the elevated spirit of the Gospel is so directly calculated to give. They almost always apply themselves to the reason. They therefore speak in a strain of rational refinement. They forget the livelier part of man, his passions. And they overlook the most active, the most manageable, half of the human frame.

This is an error, sure to be fatal to the success of our preaching for ever. While we are engaged in reasoning with the head, the heart remains totally unconcerned in the business. The former may be convinced, but the latter will not be converted. And "the great vulgar and the small" of our congregations, will for ever hear us with a cool indifference to what we are saying, and will for ever go on in a

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practical defiance of what we have told them. The small vulgar will especially do so. These make up the bulk of our congregations. Even in towns, even in the capital, even in the inns of court there, three-fourths of our hearers are necessarily employed upon the lower arts of life, with minds wholly estranged to religious speculation, and with spirits wildly afloat after pleasure and after interest. And are these the Beings, to whom we should address ourselves in a high-wrought delicacy of sentiment concerning religion, and in deep and laboured disquisitions about the heart of man? No, surely! Such reasonings may be the ambrosia and the nectar of the Gods. But they are too unsubstantial food for mortals; for fallen, corrupted, sinning mortals. They are so, even for the most improved understandings among
us,

us, in this our common state of degradation here. And they are peculiarly so for the great mass of mankind, who come under the care of their preachers, all rude and glowing from the furnace of nature, and wanting to be formed into shape and value, by the ductility which their passions give them.

Our brethren, therefore, have made a very false estimate of the nature of man. They have considered their congregations as Pure Intellects, divested of passions, and as Unfallen Beings, not tainted by corruption. In practice they have done this, though in theory they acknowledged the contrary. So much has folly overpowered conviction! And they have addressed their discourses accordingly, not to the sons and daughters of Earth, for they are fallen,

and not even to the happy children of Heaven, for they have passions; but to existences of a different kind from both, the fairy race of fancy, and the equivocal generation of the moon. They have therefore not caught a particle of that power and efficacy, which the Pulpit once obtained in this island, which the Pulpit has always possessed in other countries, in France especially, and which it will naturally possess in all. Indeed the preacher and his people are now settled into an easy kind of assurance, That all the wonders related of its operations were and are nothing more, than the result of false oratory in the one, and of false feelings in the other. A sober and dispassionate strain of preaching is affected by all. The warm, the strong, the sublime of oratory, with which the political speakers of former
and

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and of present times have carried such sway in the world, and which the Gospel so peculiarly suggests to the tongues of its orators, are all excluded from the Pulpit. We studiously avoid to enter the high regions of eloquence, and to grasp the bolt, and to dart the lightning, of the Gospel there. We keep ourselves in a lower kind of atmosphere. We love to amuse ourselves and our congregations, with catching the meteors that dance and glitter in it. And our success upon the hearts of our people is answerable to this,

The eloquence, that is adapted to the mixed numbers of a congregation, is of a mixed kind itself. It consists, I apprehend, not in elegance of language, not in refinement of thought, and not in both together; but in observations that

lie level to the common intellects of mankind, in addresses that go directly to their feelings, and in a bold, pointed, and popular language to convey them. This is the kind of oratory, which in all ages has played its magic flights so successfully upon the heart of man. This is the kind of oratory, with which Christianity so effectually arms its preachers. The tremendous sanctions of its laws; the infinite scope which it there gives to our hopes, in the eternal felicities of Heaven; and the infinite rack with which it there stretches and strains out our fears, in the everlasting miseries of Hell; carry the power of this magic of the mind, vastly beyond any thing that can be furnished from the scenes of earth. What is the ruin of an Empire, to the destruction of a World? What is the subversion of Liberty in

a na-

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a nation, to the perdition of millions of immortal Spirits? What is the murder of a Cæsar, the anguish of an Othello, or the agony of a Lear, to the terrours, the shrieks, and the groans of a condemned soul in eternity? Yet these, the grand engines of operation upon the hearts of the multitude, are almost by general consent left unhandled by our brethren. They borrow weapons, slight, shining, and indecisive, from the petty armouries of man. But the Battering Rams of the Gospel, the Heavy Artillery from the arsenals of Heaven, they never attempt to use. And, while all the other preachers of Christendom are wielding them to the best of their skill and power, they are considered amongst ourselves, as unfit to be brought into the field by an elegant preacher, and only calculated for the rude exercises of

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mechanics in their meetings, So strangely can phlegm, can fashion founded upon it, distort the understandings of men! The fantastical declaration of that *petit maitre* in preaching, "who would not mention Hell to ears polite," and who so justly incurred a strong ridicule for it, is yet realized by our modish tribe of clergy at present. And all the grand destinations of man in the Scriptures, and particularly the woes, the agonies, the horrors of Perdition, are seldom, very seldom dwelt upon by the voice of the Pulpit.

We see this plainly exemplified in our printed sermons. There is not one of any eminence among them, there is only one that I can recollect at all *, which dwells particularly

* Collet's, printed for Bell, 1775.

upon

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upon these awful points, which holds out these transporting visions, or calls forth these terrible graces, of Christian oratory, and so pushes in at the open avenues of the heart. And the printed sermons give the tone to all our preachings. Some of the most applauded of them were evidently, in their very first formation, designed for the press; though they passed through the pulpit to it. Many, and perhaps even some of these *mis-created* discourses, are every Sunday returning into our churches again. And the rest are modelled after them. With such a secret, though powerful, influence does the press operate back upon the pulpit! And of so much consequence is it, in attempting to substitute a new mode of preaching in the room of the present, not merely to point out the absurdity

absurdity of the one, but also to give a faithful draught of the other!

This has been done, I presume, in the following Sermons. They are all upon the sanctions of Christianity. I have pursued the solemn subject with a kind of historical regularity, leading the mind progressively through Death, and through Judgment, to the grand consummations of Both in Heaven and in Hell. I have dwelt upon each of these states in succession. But I have not *grouped* my representations of any of them. General images carry only a trifling impression with them. Little particulars, properly selected and arranged, do much more execution. I have therefore been as particular as I could. I have singled out such circumstances in each, as
rise

rise most readily to our imaginations in the survey, as strike most strongly upon our spirits in the appearance, or are suggested by the *picturesque* language of Scripture. And I have endeavoured to delineate the joys and the terrors of all in those forcible colours, which may make the reader immediately present to the scene described, and so enable it to act upon him with its fullest energy and power.

In doing this, I have thrown off the divisions, which are still retained in the best of our printed Sermons. They are only the remains of the old formality. They are plainly unnecessary, in the size of modern discourses. And, as they have little countenance from the practices of ancient orators, so are they contrary, in my opinion, to all the principles of genuine eloquence.

quence. But I have preserved those forms of compellation, which are wholly omitted in publications, and therefore are omitted generally by the pulpit. They seem to be absolutely requisite in oratory that is addressed to a body of people, requisite to distinguish a Sermon spoken to them from a lecture merely recited before them. And they are uniformly preserved in all the printed orations of antiquity. I have also used that kind of language in the whole, which a heart deeply impressed with its subject naturally suggested to my pen; such, I am persuaded, as is congenial to the only true oratory, that of the heart; and such, I believe, as may be aptly characterized by those lines of Mr. Pope,

A strong expression most he seem'd t' affect,
And here and there disclos'd a brave neglect.

Being

Being written in this manner, the Sermons, I trust, have done some good to the congregation for which they were composed. And, being published on these principles, I hope they will equally do good to others. They are calculated, I think, to call the Clergy to the only judicious plan of preaching, the affectionate, the warm, and the impassioned. They are certainly calculated, if I may judge from my own feelings, to serve the important interests of religion among us. And that man must have a low way of thinking indeed, who would not prefer two such objects as these, to any which he could find for himself in all the stores of literature.

Being written and published with these views, my Lord, they are inscribed to your Lordship as One,
who,

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who, I presume from your Charges, wishes much for a reformation in the mode of preaching, and who, I am persuaded from the temper of your life, is warmly earnest for the religious happiness of man. And that your Lordship may live to promote this reformation and this happiness, and therefore may continue long to your Diocess the CONDESCENDING FRIEND and the REVERED FATHER of your Clergy, is the wish,

My LORD,

of your Lordship's

most dutiful Son

and Servant,

JOHN WHITAKER.

Ruan Lanyhorne,

Nov. 25, 1782.

ERRATA.

Page 137, line 16, *for ideotlike read idiotlike.*

— 140, — 4, 5, *dele* through the merits of
Jesus Christ.

— 164, Note. After *ζωα* *put a full stop.*

— 174, line 1, *for ideot read idiot.*

John W. Whitaker

Printed by J. W. Whitaker,
1787.

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S E R M O N I.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

I TAKE these well-known words of Scripture, in order to speak to you upon some well-known Subjects from them. The thoughts of Death and Judgment are continually inculcated by the Gospel. And they cannot be inculcated too often by the Preachers of it. They form that grand principle of Christianity, on which the whole frame of Practical Religion naturally rests, and which must for ever stand the settled center of all our hopes and fears to the close of our trial upon earth.

I shall therefore begin a course of Sermons upon these important points. I shall

B

endeavour

endeavour to lead you regularly through the awful scenes of Death, through the formidable moments of Judgment, and through the tremendous allotments of Heaven or of Hell. And may I so speak and ye so hear, that those scenes, those moments, and those allotments may come forward to your understanding and affections in the liveliest manner; and rouse every sleeping son and daughter of Christianity among you, to a more serious consideration of the ground ye stand upon in life, to a more heartfelt reflection on the hastening hour of Death, and to a stricter preparation for the day of everlasting Judgment!

In the original designs of Providence, the human body was intended to be free from all the diseases by which it is now destroyed, and exempt even from all the decays with which it is now worn away. Those diseases are purely the children of sin in their origin. And those decays were all prevented by the fruit of the **TREE OF LIFE**. This preserved the frame of our
bodies

bodies in a continual state of renewed vigour; while the cool and religious composure of the mind, the healthfulness of the body, and the goodness of the air and ground, kept off all those positive disorders, which are now so much oftener the bane of life, than the mere weaknesses of nature*.—Of such a situation, indeed, we can hardly form any proper notion at present, because all that we have experienced of our own is so totally different from it. But we know it to have existed, on the authority of Scripture. And we know it to have been destroyed by the introduction of Sin. “Sin entered into the world,” we are expressly told by St. Paul, “and DEATH BY SIN; and so DEATH PASSED UPON ALL MEN, FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED.” † And in another place we are told, that “THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH ‡.” Death would *naturally* have

* For the proof of this curious point, the Author referred his *bearers* to some Sermons which he had lately preached to them. And he refers his *readers* for it to the many publications upon the subject.

† Romans, v. 12.

‡ Romans, vi. 23.

happened to our perishing frames, even in the scenes of Paradise; had it not been for the life-giving fruit there. And, after the Fall, it was *now* “appointed unto man “once to die:” the Tree of Life being withdrawn from him; and the corruptions of nature calling in a variety of diseases, to forestall the slow workings of mortality in his body, and so consign him to an earlier grave.

Nor has the Redemption, which has taken away the general curse of the Fall, removed this particular punishment of it from our bodies. It still remains fixed upon us, as a branding memorial of our former rebellion, as a proper check to that spirit of the rebellion which still continues within us, and as a necessary part of a probationary state of recovery. Men, however delivered from the doom of everlasting misery for their sins, however provided by Christianity with an atonement for their offences, and with a pardon upon their penitence, are yet vicious. They are therefore letting in diseases upon them continually.

tinually. And they are still debarred from any approach to the Tree of Life. They are debarred; because, though the fruit might even now check the workings of a natural mortality in their bodies, yet it could not save them, either from diseases which they might have in themselves, or from the injuries that might be done them by others. The Good, we know, bring disorders upon themselves by occasional excesses. They also inherit disorders from their less virtuous parents. And they are likewise exposed to the malice of the Bad, and so liable to receive bodily injuries from them. In a world of Fallen Beings therefore, however blessed with the glorious scheme of a Redemption, the influence of Death must still go on; because some still act with all the baleful spirit of the Fall in their souls, because even others are occasionally acting so likewise, and because the fear of Death is the curb of God in the mouths of the former, and the presence of Death is a useful monument of his wrath upon the nature of both.

For these reasons, Death hath continually reigned over the whole of the human race, from the Fall of Adam to the present moment. And he will continue his reign to that wonderful period of our human history, when "Death shall be swallowed up in victory;" when his triumphs over our degraded natures shall be all at an end; and when we, who are now the subjects of disease and the victims of mortality, shall break from the prison of the grave, and be able to insult over the long-established tyrants of our race in that high strain of Gospel rapture, "O Death, where is *now* thy sting? O Grave, where is *now* thy victory?"

'Till that day comes, the grand object of every good man's wish, we must be content to tread the way which all our Fathers have trod before us. The body must sink into the grave, and the soul must mount into eternity. And these two parts of our nature must be separated to the day of Judgment.

The body we are obliged to put under the earth, to save ourselves from being shocked at the sight of that remainder of the sentence of sin, which is executed upon us after death. Then all that once was healthy, fair, and sparkling is no more. The bloom of beauty on the cheek, the liveliness of meaning in the eye, and the flush of health in the whole countenance, are all lost and sunk in one common mass of corruption. The brow, on which the concerns of empire sat, the arm, which could direct the storm of battle, or the lips, that could do what is much more important than either, that could touch effectually the hearts of a congregation with the feeling eloquence of the Gospel, could shake them with its terrors, and could soothe them with its comforts; all lie reduced to the same level with the common children of the earth, all lie enduring the same punishment of the Fall, and all lie expecting the same deliverance from it. Some parts of their bodies, indeed, may be divided to the Four Winds,

and be dispersed over the face of the universe. But the time will come, when they shall claim their scattered particles from every quarter of the globe, when they shall vindicate their fugitive remains from all the elements, and when the powers of Death and Destruction shall be found to have been exercised upon them in vain.

Not that indeed *all* the parts of the body, which are laid in the grave, shall be raised up from it. Only the main, only the principal, parts of it shall; only such as are requisite to make it the same body. — There are, ye know, many parts of our bodies, which are continually flying off from them; and the secret change, which is made every day in our frames, is very wonderful. But, amidst this perpetual flux of some parts, there are evidently others, which are fixed and unmoveable, as they give a continual sameness to the body in all the different stages of its growth. The turn of the *countenance*, particularly, remains confessedly the same in general through every period of our lives. And this

this must necessarily be occasioned by some parts of our bodies continuing always the same; remaining fixed when others are unfixed, and abiding unchangeable by time or place, under all the changes that happen to the rest. These, these are the parts, that compose the original frame of our bodies. These are the parts, that are continually increased by growth. And these are the parts, which will be recalled from their long wanderings at the Resurrection, and restored to their original union in our bodies. The rest are infinite in number, are thrown off from us every day, and are entering hourly into the substance of other animals. They are fitted to further the growth of animals, and to increase the size of the fixed parts; while the fixed parts themselves must ever remain unchangeable by corruption, and can never belong to any but their first proprietor.

And I mention this the more particularly, in order to obviate an objection, which very naturally occurs to the mind,
and

and has puzzled many a serious Christian, in considering the resurrection of the same body. Some part of a human frame may be devoured by a man-eater, they know, and so form a part of his body. "In the "Resurrection therefore" to which of the two shall it belong? In truth, it will belong to neither. It made only an occasional part of the body of either. It was taken in for the support, it was cast off for the relief, of the body. And it returns at last into that common mass of matter, from which it was derived. Should *all* the parts, that have ever been united in this manner with one of our bodies, be again brought together at the Resurrection; there could not possibly be room for them in the body. But only those will be raised from "the dust of death," which continued unchangeable through life, and which will equally continue unchangeable through death.

And I also mention this, in order to answer a doubt, which has often hung heavy on the minds of the sorrowing Good.

While

While they are drooping over the grave of a deceased friend, their spirits are frequently oppressed with fears, That, though they shall be raised and made happy with him in heaven, yet they shall not *know* him again; That the Resurrection will so change and alter him, as that he will be utterly undistinguishable among the crowds in bliss. But this is an error as great as it is afflictive; and ought to be removed from pure principles of compassion.—As the same body is to be raised from the grave that is laid there, it must *appear* the same to the eye of all beholders. That, which makes it appear the same through life, must equally make it appear so in the Resurrection. The same fixed and unalterable parts remain. And they must continue to give it the same air, the same turn of countenance and look, as it had before. The whole man, therefore, must be as easily distinguishable by every eye that knew him, as ever he was in life. And he must be as capable as ever of knowing his friends, of receiving their kindnesses, and of enjoying their company.—But let

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us not trust to reasoning only. Let us appeal to the FACTS of Scripture. And there we shall see what I have said, so plainly proved; that we shall wonder how it ever came to be doubted.

When "the rocks were rent and the graves were opened" at our Saviour's crucifixion, and when "many bodies of Saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves, after his Resurrection;" "they went," says St. Matthew, "into the Holy City, and APPEARED unto many *." These were some good men, whose bodies slept sweetly in the grave, and who were singled out for this peculiar honour of rising with their rising Lord. They had not been buried long. Their faces were yet well-known to many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And, when they rose from their graves at a little distance from the city, they took their well-known way into it, they repaired immediately to their relations and friends there, and they were fully known and ac-

* xxvii. 52, 53.

known

known by them. Had they not been known to have died and been buried, had they not been evidently and plainly the very persons that were remembered to have died and been buried; they would not have been any proof of a miraculous resurrection to the Jews, they would not have appeared as men risen from the grave at all.

And to place the point (if possible) in a still stronger light for you, let us observe the *Person* of our Saviour himself after his resurrection.—He was just the same man in aspect, in air, in manner, that he was before. His hands and his feet were even still marked with the print of the nails. And his side even still shewed the scar of the wound, which had been made in it by the spear. His countenance also was exactly the same, and as readily known by his disciples as ever it was. And he had even the same peculiarities of voice and action, which had distinguished him before his Death.—Thus, when Mary Magdalen sought his body in the Sepulchre on the morning of his Resurrection, and spoke half-

half-turning to the supposed gardener about it; our Saviour at last, speaking in his own tone of voice to her, instantly convinced her in a single word that it was he himself: "Jesus" (the Evangelist tells us) "saith unto her, Mary; she *turned* herself, and saith unto him, RABBONI, which is to say, MASTER *." Jesus now spoke to her by her name in his usual voice. And, struck with the well-known sound, she turned wholly about, looked at him, and knew him.—But there is also another fact, which is perhaps still more particular. On the same day of the Resurrection, and towards the evening, two of our Saviour's disciples went from Jerusalem to a neighbouring village; when our Saviour joined them on the road, and began to discourse with them. "But," says the Scripture, "their eyes were holden, that they should not know him." They would have known him by his look and voice, ye see, if a miracle had not been exerted to prevent it. And, when they had reached

* John xx. 16.

the village, they pressed their unknown Saviour to go in and spend the evening with them. He went in accordingly. And, on sitting down to supper, He said Grace before meat so exactly in his old manner, the extraordinary force upon their senses being now withdrawn, as made them immediately recollect and know him. "It came to pass," says St. Luke, "as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them; and their eyes were opened, and they knew him;—and he was known unto them in breaking of bread*."—Our Saviour therefore was just the same in his looks, in his tone of voice, and in his peculiarities of action, after his Resurrection; as he was before it. And, consequently, we shall all of us be equally the same.

Die then we must. The punishment of the Fall still pursues our redeemed nature so far, as fearfully to separate the soul from

* xxiv. 16, 30, 31, and 35.

the body, and lay our earthly part in the grave, a sacrifice to sin, and a prey to corruption. But, thanks be to the redeeming Jesus, this is all that it can do. Its power extends no farther. And “here shall its proud waves be stayed.” These very bodies, over which Death insults for a time, shall shake off his authority, and burst from the bands of destruction in spite of him. The arm even of an Angel cannot save us from the grave. But even legions of Angels cannot keep us there. We shall mount, we shall mount, from our humble abode in the dust; as our blessed Saviour has done before us. And, like him, we shall carry these very bodies to Heaven with us. Those very hands of yours, which now perform the business of this world, will (if ye are not wanting to yourselves) be all one day employed in the better business of Heaven. Those very voices of yours, which have been just now exerted in the devotions of this holy place, will one day (if ye are not unfaithful to your best interest) will all one day be exerted in a nobler strain of devotion,

devotion, and amidst the mingling melody of Angels, at the foot of the throne of God. And we shall all, that are now here, meet and know each other in those regions of bliss, remember the connections which we formed on earth, enjoy the friendships which gladdened our hearts in life, and encourage and animate each other to higher and higher degrees of affection for God; till all that has past in this world, even the tenderest endearments of friendship, and even the greatest mercies of God towards us, shall perhaps seem only like the faint recollections of a dream, and shall sink, overpowered and lost, in the superior endearments, and in the greater mercies, that we shall have received from him in Eternity.

Therefore to God the Father, &c.

S E R M O N II.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

HAVING laid before you the nature of that awful period of our being, in which we are lying under the sentence of the Fall, so far as it concerns our bodies; I shall now go on to explain it in its more important view, as it relates to the immortal Spirits within us. These, in the state of separation from their bodies at death, do not, like them, come under the punishment of the Fall. That is confined entirely to the body. And, while the body is consigned over to corruption, and delivered up to the power of those humblest children of corruption, the worms; the soul mounts (as it were)
upon

upon wings of fire, and repairs to the grand abode provided for it by God, the resting-place for all human Spirits from the day of Death to the hour of Judgment.

This resting-place is frequently mentioned in Scripture under the same general name, which also signifies the place of torment for the damned, that of HELL. And nothing but the sense of the passage can determine, which of them is meant by the word. Thus Isaiah, foretelling the speedy death of that King of Babylon who had oppressed the Jews, and representing it as having already happened, draws forth the Royal Dead in the mansion of disembodied Spirits, and brings them forward to triumph over the soul of the tyrant, immediately on his entrance there. "HELL," says the Prophet, "HELL from beneath
" is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy
" coming; it stirreth up the dead for
" thee, even all the chief ones of the earth:
" —all they shall speak and say unto thee,
" Art thou also become weak as we? Art
C 2 " thou

“ thou become like unto us? Thy pomp
 “ is brought down to the grave, and the
 “ noise of thy viols; the worm is spread
 “ under thee, and the worms cover thee *.”

Here the word HELL is plainly used to signify the abode of departed Spirits, the abode in which they reside from the hour of their departure to the moments of the Resurrection. And, since the word means merely a *heled* † or covered place, it may as properly refer to that covered place in which all human souls continue during their separation, as to that to which some of them will be dreadfully consigned with their bodies at the Resurrection.—So also, in the common Creed of our Church, and in the Acts of the Apostles, the soul of our Saviour is said to have gone down into HELL. Not that it went to the horrid dungeon of damned Spirits. No! The expression means only, that his soul went to the general place of souls at his death, and that it came from thence to be again united to the body at his Resurrection.

* xiv. 9, 10, 11.

† This word is still used familiarly in Cornwall, &c.

This abode for the souls of all men must have been first provided by God at the Fall. Before that fatal period, as our race was not subject to death, our souls were not liable to be separated from our bodies. We should have continued with Both through every stage of our being, in Time and in Eternity. And, when our hour of trial had been once past, we should have mounted in our bodies to our great reward, and, like Elijah perhaps, have been whirled away in a chariot of light to the mansions of Angels. But when Death, that eldest-born of Sin, entered into the world, the two parts of our nature were necessarily rent asunder for a time. And the active and spiritual half of us was obliged to drop her old companion in the dust, to take her flight beyond the bounds of this world, and there to continue to the day of Judgment.

This place is necessarily divided into two parts, to suit the two divisions of good and bad Spirits upon earth. One part therefore is the seat of the souls of

the Good, and the other of the souls of the Bad. And the former is called PARADISE and ABRAHAM'S BOSOM in Scripture. Thus the soul of Lazarus the Beggar is said to be "carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom." And our Saviour promises the repentant thief on the cross, that he should that very day be happy with him "in Paradise." But the other part has no particular name in Scripture, and is only distinguished by such circumstances as are peculiarly descriptive of it. Thus the soul of the Rich man is said in Scripture to, "lift up his eyes in HELL," that is, in the general place of departed Spirits; but, as appears from the accompanying circumstances, in that part of it which was provided for the wicked. For he is said to be settled in a "place of torments," to be *in actual torments* there, and to be "tormented in the flames" of it. He was plainly therefore in the awful prison-house of those wretched Spirits, which had revolted from GOD in life, and now were fearfully reserved for Judgment.

Not

Not that indeed these unhappy Spirits suffer any *outward* punishment, in this state of reservation for Judgment. As they are merely Spirits, they cannot. Their bodies, the only means by which they could be punished from without, are left to rot in the Earth. And they cannot be so punished, till they receive their bodies back from the hands of Death, and appear once more in their completely human form. In the mean time, all their misery consists in a trembling reflection on their past follies, and in a trembling prospect of their future judgment. And the intimation that is given us in Scripture, concerning *torments* and *flames* in this middle state of our being, must be considered, not as literally and circumstantially true, but as merely expressive of the general wretchedness of the place. Torments can have no room upon a Being, that is only spiritual. Flames can have no activity, where there is no body for them to act upon. And the soul of man, in this its absence from the body, must be wholly unassailable from without. All its sufferings, all its

enjoyments, must necessarily be as spiritual as itself, and arise merely from the working of its own thoughts, and the ferment of its own reflections, from the consciousness of its conduct in the now vanished scenes of life, and from the certainty of its reception at the coming moments of Judgment. And it will be religiously useful to all of you, I trust, if I undraw (as it were) the curtain of Eternity, and lay open the secrets of this Hall of Spirits, on the sure warrant of Scripture and of reason.

Let us suppose therefore one of that Angel-kind of Spirits, which form the soul of man, summoned from its seat in the body, and ordered into Eternity. The ties, that united it with the body, and that were once intended by GOD to have been as immortal as the soul herself, are now broken. And she finds herself in a condition peculiarly solemn and important. The stroke of the Fall is over. It has had its full force in the divorcement of the soul from the body. All her fate, all her destiny, her eternal happiness or eternal misery, now depends

depends entirely upon herself. And, what is awfully formidable to the thought, all her fate, all her destiny, her eternal happiness or eternal misery, is already determined by herself. She has already exerted the dreadful power, that was intrusted to her in life. And her determination stands recorded upon the book of God.

Her determination has been perhaps to go on with the multitude, to proceed through life in a middle kind of state between Goodness and Badness, to act as a Neutral between God and his revolted Angels, and to be very inoffensive to the Good, very inoffensive to the Bad also, and very indifferent to religion. This, ye must all have observed, is a very common character in life, and takes in the bulk of the sons and daughters of men. And it is a character strangely considered with respect by the many, who know not what religion is, who weigh not the necessity of an active goodness, and who reflect not on the mean and cowardly principles on which such a man proceeds towards his God. For mean
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and cowardly will he appear even to himself, when he comes to be launched into Eternity.

His soul, we will suppose, is at this instant on the wing for those peculiar apartments, which are fitted to hold their spiritual inhabitants from earth. He now begins to see the importance of life, in a much stronger light than he did before. He sees, he feels a sudden conviction darting in upon his mind, and in the most forcible language assuring him, That an immortal Spirit, like man's, was not sent into the world merely to be a blank, a cipher in religion, but to begin and pursue the grand work of purging off the corruptions of the Fall, of refining her debased nature, and of preparing herself for the society of Angels. He finds therefore, that he has *trifled* away those important moments, which were lent for the most serious purposes; that, whatever else he has done, he has neglected the great business of life; and that, whatever other point he has secured, he has lost the one
grand

grand stake, the one main interest, of his whole being. He has lived through his allotted period of time perhaps, with activity and with zeal in the pursuit of earthly objects; while the infinitely superiour objects of Heaven could raise no activity in his mind, and could call out no zeal in his soul. He has lived without that friendship for God, which is the vital spark of happiness to every Spirit that God has brought into being. And he dies therefore without any of that assistance on him, which is the cheering lamp of the soul, on her passage through the chambers of death.

The vain crowds about him, that kept him in countenance through life, are all vanished from his eye. He has no support without, and he has none within. He finds himself hastening to the world of Spirits, without one assurance, even from the partialities of self-love, That he has properly endeavoured to merit a seat in peace there. He arrives at the wonderful palace, which is the grand store-house (as it were) of all the Spirits that have been incarnate

incarnate from the death of Adam to his own. The gates open to admit him. And he instantly finds himself placed among those throngs of souls, that have justly forfeited their claims to happiness, and are now kept for the righteous judgment of God.

There he stands amazed for a while, perhaps, at the strangeness of his allotment. He had never been guilty of any great offences. He had seldom fallen into the grossnesses of sin. And his life had gone on in one general tenour of honesty and good-will to man.—But his heart had been wholly estranged to the spirit of religion. He had been cold and dead to all the views of the Gospel. And his soul had scarcely ever felt one quickening spark of devotion within. Could such a spirit therefore be fit for the joys of Heaven, where Religion must be the inspiring principle of happiness, and where Devotion must heighten it occasionally into an ecstasy of bliss?—He had been repeatedly ashamed to acknowledge his God in conversation

versation with men, because forsooth the majority of GOD's creatures were in a strange combination to forget him entirely in company. And his heart never went out, in secret, with gratitude and reverence and affection towards him. Could such a Spirit therefore be suited for the enjoyment of GOD in Heaven, where the sight of his presence must carry continual joy to the soul, and where the heart must be perpetually springing forward towards him, proud to own, and happy to love, the Father and the Friend of man?

No, it could not. Such a man must necessarily sink into wretchedness at death. He can see nothing in his past life, that can recommend him to the notice of a neglected GOD. He can see nothing in his future fortune, but that his lot must still be cast with the men who have revolted from GOD, and he must still have his portion with the positively ungodly. His punishment indeed will be less severe than theirs. But he will be punished with them, shut out for ever from the presence of GOD, that source of
light

light and joy to all the Spirits of God, and, so, necessarily subjected to misery for ever. He then bewails his own folly in life. He laments his easy affiance on the spirit of the world. He condemns in the severest terms his simple credulity of mind, in obeying man rather than God. He wishes for the moments to return, that he has thrown away in all the unmeaningness of a soul, not bent upon its great task, not in earnest about its own salvation. He was sent into the world, to be happy in the only way, in which a rational Spirit can possibly be happy, in keeping up a communion with God, in cultivating a friendship with him, and in preparing himself for the actual sight of him. And he has been ridiculously employing the sacred moments of life, as he now sees, in the errantest trifles, in the pettiest kind of play, in the diversions of mere childhood. For all employ, all business, however grave or serious in appearance, however dignified by the seeming wisdom of man, if it interferes with the religious purposes of life; in the eye of God, in the eye even of Angels,

gels, is nothing better than the errantest trifles, is nothing better than the pettiest kind of play, is nothing better than the diversions of mere childhood. Even the concerns of commerce, even the attentions of learning, even the interests of empire, whenever they keep the soul from her first, her principal pursuit, are in reality a mere gathering of cockle-shells, or a mere picking of straws, to the Immortal Spirit within us. And that Spirit, in her state of separation from the body, in her state of sequestration from the world; when the things of life present themselves in their true colours; when she has an awful interval of time, to reflect upon them seriously; and when she is called upon by her situation, to consider them with the utmost seriousness; then, then she sees them in the same just and diminutive view.

While the two worlds of Angels and of Men were all deeply engaged about religion; while God, the Father of Both, was exerting all the powers of his wisdom,

and exhausting all the treasures of his mercy, to save the ruined race of men; he alone had seemed unconcerned in the mighty work; he alone beheld the efforts with an indifferent eye; and his own fate, the fate of a whole world of embodied Spirits, which moved and wrung (as it were) the heart of God himself, carried no weight with it to this lethargick soul. Though all nature was in commotion about the future destiny of man; though the Devils were eagerly employed in drawing him off from religion and happiness; though the Angels were as eagerly engaged in counteracting their designs, and in keeping him steady to his duty and his interest; though God himself had descended from Heaven for the same purpose, had even become man, had even suffered himself to be poor, distressed, and persecuted, and at last had died upon the cross, to accomplish it; yet he had been slumbering on under all, and he had been busy only in the wild foolery of dreams.

Thus,

Thus, thus employed is every one, whatever he may think of himself, who is not engaged in the work of religion. And thus will every one think of his employments, in the awful world of Spirits. He will then look back to the past in this strong and pointed manner. He will therefore look forward to the future with affright and dismay. The past is gone for ever. The future is hastening rapidly upon him. And the present fills his soul with anguish. He is already placed among the wretched children of sin and sorrow. He will be placed among them for ever, at the hour of Judgment. And he will be made to take his horrible allotment with them, in the vengeance, in the terrors, and in the flames of an incensed God.

From this allotment may ye and I deliver ourselves, by hearkening to the admonitions of GOD, and so becoming serious and earnest in the business for which we came into the world; considering it as the

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first, great purpose of our life; and making it the principal object of our thoughts; the ruling passion of our souls, and the central aim of our conduct: through JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

S E R-

S E R M O N III.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

I N speaking to you from this text, I have already explained the nature of Death with regard to our bodies. I have also gone on to open to you that wonderful abode of Spirits, in which the souls of all flesh are kept from the hour of their departure to the time of the Resurrection. And I have shewn you particularly, on the warrant of Scripture and of reason, what must be the situation, the thoughts, and the sufferings there, of every soul that goes on through life, cold and indifferent to the interests of religion, not offensive indeed to goodness, but never serious, never earnest in the work of her own salvation. Such a Spirit, I shewed you, must necessarily

sink into wretchedness at death.—And, if this is the case with mere indifference about religion, what, think ye, must be the case with positive wickedness? If the inoffensive man, if he who never fell into the grossnesses of sin, if he who went on in a middle state of life betwixt goodness and badness, will find (as he certainly will find) his condition after death miserable and afflicted; what must be the condition of him, whose conduct has been very offensive, who has repeatedly fallen into the grossnesses of sin, and who has acted perhaps in a kind of half-warfare against religion? It must be peculiarly miserable. It must be doubly afflicted.

When a wicked Spirit, that was sent into the world for his appointed time, in order to gain a habit of goodness, and so obtain a title to happiness, feels himself approaching near to the end of that appointed time, and just on the recal into Eternity; how severe must be his reflections, how sharp his feelings, in thinking of his past conduct and his future destiny! He has

perhaps gained a habit of Drunkenness instead of Goodness, while he has been in the body. He has perhaps forgotten the God that sent him into the world, and who is most affectionately endeavouring to provide for his happiness. And he has gone on for weeks, for months, for years, perhaps, in a total neglect of all private prayers to him. All these things now present themselves to his reviewing mind. The ghosts (as it were) of his departed and sinful hours all rise before him, and haunt his bed of Death. And his soul becomes as much oppressed with sickness as his body. He turns probably from the tormenting view. He endeavours to arm himself against it by some of the wretched arguments, that used to support him in the hour of health. But he finds them now all unable to support him. His understanding now sees the folly of them at a single glance. And he wonders they could ever deceive him. He rolls about on his bed, he turns from side to side, and vainly endeavours to gain comfort to his mind by giving ease to his body. His friends per-

haps see his uneasiness. They enquire after the cause of it. He is unwilling probably to tell them at first, and to acknowledge the powerful convictions that are now breaking in upon his soul. But they grow too strong for concealment. They burst from him in spite of himself. And his friends hear the dismal account with terror. Yet with the pretended good-nature and the real cruelty, that is generally used on such occasions, they endeavour to soothe his fears by lessening his convictions. Instead of congratulating him on his present feelings, however late; instead of exhorting him earnestly to pursue them, to turn immediately to his offended God, and supplicate for pardon through the blood of JESUS; they endeavour probably to make his sinfulness of conduct appear much less sinful than it has been, they talk to him in a half-profligate strain of the corruptions of our nature and the universality of wickedness, and they then throw him on the un-promised, the un-bounded, the extravagant mercies of God. And thus they endeavour to dispatch him into Eternity,
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with all his sins about him, and without even that short preparation of penitence, which the fearful necessities of his nature are properly forcing upon him. Thousands of souls, no doubt, have been thus sent out of the world, by the murderous kindness of surrounding friends; and so have awaked to a full sense of their situation, only just when all sense of it was in vain.

• But perhaps the wicked man, whose death we are now supposing, is not to be wrought upon by such wretched reasoning. His understanding is too clear to be cheated, and his passions are too strong to be calmed, by it. And he sees, that neither the alledged corruptions of our nature, nor the pretended universality of wickedness, can justify his own conduct. His corrupted nature, he knows, was assisted by Divine Grace; and his earnest endeavours after goodness, though very imperfect, would have been accepted as perfect through the merits of his Redeemer. And that he should be excused for revolting from God, because thousands of wretched Spirits have

done the same; that he should stand guiltless at the bar of Heaven, merely because he has been guilty with others; is a plea, as he now feels, which he cannot have the assurance to urge to his despised God; and it would be a great addition to his sins, if he could.

He properly resolves therefore to seize the few moments of life that are left him, and to devote them all to the sorrow of contrition, to prayers for pardon, and to vows of obedience. He sends also (we will suppose) for his Parish-Priest to assist him, in this awful interval of life and death, in these moments of hard and desperate struggling into Eternal Happiness or Eternal Misery. But what can be done for him, in this dreadful extremity of distress? The repentance of a death-bed, the contrition that begins when life is ending, and the obedience that is vowed when Hell (as it were) is just opening upon disobedience; these can but seldom be of any moment. They are generally raised, not by a sense of duty, but by the terrors of punishment.

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They are generally therefore nothing more than the mere instinct of nature, shuddering at the immediate prospect before it, and running back from the gulph that is yawning to receive it. And for that reason they generally come to nothing, if the scene of death is providentially removed by a restoration of health. How many instances are there of men, thus frightfully falling back into all their former sins, when they have been raised from the bed of death; and even laughing at all their past terrors. And how few are there of any real alteration being made in their life and spirit, by their near approaches to the verge of Hell. That there are *some* however, is a sufficient reason for not condemning *every* death-bed penitence, and for not shutting the gates of mercy upon *all*, that defer their resolution of obedience till their hour of trial seems drawing to its end. Yet that there are *so few*, is a strong proof how seldom such penitence is sincere, and how rarely such resolutions are thoroughly made from the heart. A death-bed repentance,
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if sincere, will certainly be accepted by God through Christ. But, whether it is sincere or not, even the penitent himself cannot tell. God only knows at the moment, and time only (if time is allowed him) can prove it hereafter. And, that it generally is *not* sincere, the general behaviour of such as recover most sadly shews. What then can the Clergyman speak of comfort to him? He can only hope for the best. He can only point out the alarming nature of his situation, the absolute necessity of an immediate and a strong repentance, and the danger he is in of mistaking the fears of Hell for a hatred of sin. And the rest must in a great measure be left to the dying penitent himself. He stands on the fearful edge of life, tottering to his fall, and ready to tumble headlong every moment. In fancy he already sees the House of Spirits throwing open its gates to receive him. In fancy he sees himself carried thither by those attendant Angels of wickedness, which have been continually seducing him into sin, and are now to pu-
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nish him for his compliance with them. And his justly boding mind feels beforehand the horrors of his situation there.

In this mournful melancholy of soul, he launches into Eternity ; equally convulsed perhaps in body and in soul, and lying a shocking memorial of the folly of sin to all his friends. They feel it in every nerve. They hear his groans, they see his convulsions, for days and weeks after they are past. They determine to become religious. They actually become so for a while, probably. But the impression generally wears off by degrees. The design of God, in placing their dying friend thus strongly before their eyes, begins to be frustrated. They endeavour to shake off the thought. And they are sure to succeed in their efforts. They become at last as if they had never seen the dreadful spectacle. And they go on to renew it probably in themselves, and to be themselves a shocking memorial of the same truth to others.

In the mean time, their departed friend is fixed in Eternity. There he finds all his dying fears and apprehensions too sadly true. He is in that wretched assembly of Spirits, who are kept locked up the prisoners of despair, and will be delivered, only, for trial and for execution at the day of Judgment. He sees nothing but sadness sitting upon every soul. He hears nothing but sorrow issuing from every Spirit. All is mournfulness, all is melancholy, all is horreur, around him.

How Spirits that have no bodies can *spe*ak, we know not. But we are certain that they can. The Angels, we are sure, speak to each other. And God himself, the purest of all Spirits, has frequently spoken to men, ye know, and is frequently speaking to Angels. Our souls therefore, in this their state of separation from the body, will not only retain all their powers of thinking, but also be able to speak their thoughts to each other. Indeed a thinking Spirit, not capable of *communicating* its thoughts,

thoughts, would be an absurdity in the creation. And sadly sorrowful must be their conversation, in this Prison-house of the wicked. That joy, which once sparkled in the eyes and shone out in the conversation perhaps of a sinner, is now all gone, and gone for ever. Where is that fund of chearfulness and that fountain of pleasantry in his mind, which kept him so lively and so gay in life, even under the sense of an offended God, even under the prospect of what he now suffers? It is all gone, and gone for ever. In life he could shuffle off the thoughts of his offended God, he could turn away from the prospect of what he now suffers. But now, in the solemn and sequestered scenes of Eternity, those thoughts rush upon him with a violence which he cannot resist, and that prospect is now changed into actual suffering. The world, and all its draughts of sleepiness for the soul, are now withdrawn. He sees, he feels his offended God in his *present* allotment. And the thoughts of what his *future* will be torment him perpetually. He feels too strongly the present,

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to be easy even for a moment. He has too lively a foretaste of the future, not to be in exquisite sufferings of mind. And his thoughts cannot step out of himself, without coming back immediately with an addition to his woe, from the helpless, the ruined, the weeping society about him.

In this the first region of sorrow to the souls of sinners, we cannot doubt, but that, as they can talk, they will also *know* one another. How mere souls can do either of these, we are equally ignorant. But they can do both, no doubt. And our Saviour accordingly represents the soul of the Rich Man in the Parable, as knowing Abraham and Lazarus, as well as talking to them. The Spirits of deceased men, therefore, will know one another in the world of Spirits, just as much as they will in their bodies after the Resurrection. And this consideration adds greatly to the terrors of the place which I am describing. There, those souls will meet and know each other, that have been instrumental in bringing each other to this general seat of sorrow.

And

And what must be their self-condemnations, what their mutual upbraidings, what their lamentations in conjunction! The mind of man cannot conceive a greater picture of horror on this side Judgment and Hell; than a family, once united in friendship and in sinfulness, all meeting together, and all finding themselves irrecoverably undone. In such a case, how readily will the children endeavour to cast the blame of their ruin upon their parents, upon the bad education which they gave them, and upon the bad examples that they set them. And how much must this increase the weight of the parents woe, already bending under the load of their own afflictions, and now feeling an addition to it from the imputed misery of their children. They will endeavour, therefore, to throw a part of the load back upon their children, where no doubt it ought to rest; and to charge them with being, as no doubt they were, equal causers of their own ruin. And they will all agree at last, we may suppose, to leave the determination to the righteous judgment of God, to

wait with a fearful trembling for the day, and in the mean time to join in a dreadful concert of lamentation; to add their own sighs and sorrows to those of the wailing multitudes about them, and to increase the general chorus of mournfulness and melancholy there.

Such then, in general, must be the state of the unhappy souls, that go out of life un-reconciled to God through Christ. And it is useful for me to lay open, and for you to view, the whole wretched scene as distinctly as possible. Remember therefore, that, at the very instant I am now talking to you, there are thousands of souls which were once in the flesh, now, now, in the very situation I have been describing. They are, at this very moment of time, lamenting their own folly in life, condemning their own conduct on earth, and speaking with terror of the day, that will soon recall them to their bodies, and soon consign them over to positive punishments. And Oh! cherish the awful thought,

thought, give full force to the dreadful consideration, and now, even now, determine by the grace of GOD to become religious. The hour cannot be at a great distance from any of you, it may perhaps be very near to several, it may be to-morrow for some, when *ye* also shall receive the summons of death, and *your* souls shall be conveyed to the House of Spirits. Should *ye then* be found unprepared, should *ye then* be taken in the act or in the habit of sin, how deplorable must be your condition! No distress of earth can be equal to what yours will be. The down-fall of empires, the murder of monarchs, or the saddest scenes of domestick wretchedness, are all only trifling calamities, the mere sorrows of a boy; when they are compared with the ruin of an immortal Spirit, snatched away from the world in its sins, and thrown into the common dungeon of wicked souls. And *ye* are called upon by every consideration, that can move you as men and as Christians, to reflect upon it seriously.

All those unhappy Spirits were once like you, treading this ball of earth, and on their trial for happiness or misery. Many of them, no doubt, were once as flourishing in health as the most vigorous among you, and as little expected as ye do now the speedy stroke of death. And many, no doubt, were like many of you, forming resolutions of becoming truly religious at some future period of time, neglecting the only time that was theirs, the present, and so never seeing that future at all. Take care therefore, that ye be not also like them, that ye do not neglect the present moment, and that so ye do not suffer what they are now suffering. What would *they* give to be now like unto you in only one particular, to be still in a state of trial, and to have still a capacity left them of working out their salvation? They would give the world, if they had it, for this invaluable privilege, which they once possessed, and which ye possess at this moment. They would be infinitely thankful, to be allowed only to come upon earth again, and to take a second chance for the happiness

ness of Heaven; even though they were to drink the bitterest cup of worldly miseries for it. No distresses of poverty, no pains of body, no afflictions of mind that did not affect the conscience, would seem severe to them, in comparison with that doleful mansion from which they had escaped, and in comparison with that much more doleful one from which they had been preserved. Nothing would then seem of particular moment to them in happiness, but what reached up to the Heaven of Heavens. Nothing would seem of extraordinary concern to them in misery, but what went down to the depths of Hell. And they would be all life, all seriousness, all earnestness, in the work of their own salvation.

Oh, be ye therefore what they would be! Be as much alive, be as serious, be as earnest, as they would be, in the work of your salvation. Ye have the same stake in Eternity with them. Only they know the importance of it, from their sad experience in the Spiritual House of Mourning.

And their experience must be either your warning or your punishment. Oh, let it be the former! Hear the wretched multitudes, as crying to you from the vault of Spirits, and bidding you beware, "lest ye" "also come into that place of torments." And perhaps ye can distinguish amongst them the dismal voices of some of your own friends, some of your own relations, not yet unmindful of their former connections with you, and calling to you in sighs and groans, that deep-toned language of a wretched Eternity, for their sakes, for your own, to leave the sinful practices into which they have led, or in which they have encouraged you; lest ye should add the ruin of your own souls to theirs, and so aggravate their portion in misery.

GOD grant, that ye may hear their voices, that ye may repent at this awful preaching of "the Spirits in prison," and that ye may none of you be partakers with them in their dreadful condemnation. This I beg for you, in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

S E R M O N IV.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

IN my last Sunday's discourse from these words, I described to you the condition of all wicked souls, during their state of separation from their bodies after death, in as strong and pointed a manner as I could; in order to strike upon your spirits, and to alarm your fears, for the noblest purposes. I shall now endeavour to give you a very different picture of the same state, and to hold up to your eye the very opposite of all this; to describe to you the happiness of a soul sincerely Christian, when taken from the body, and carried into Eternity. And I hope that what I

shall now say upon the subject will gain upon your minds, and engage your hearts, from the more generous principles of love.

When a thinking man, who has been generally executing the purposes for which he was sent into the world, and amid many falls and many corruptions has been still pursuing the principal business of his being, finds himself on the bed of serious sickness; he does not neglect the warning, he does not presume upon a recovery which he has no right to expect. His spirits, which were tremblingly alive in health with regard to his grand interest beyond the grave, take an immediate alarm at the supposed summons, and put him on an immediate preparation for his departure. If he recovers, he shall have gained by his awful approach to the gates of death, by his half-entrance (as it were) into the abode of Spirits. And, should he not recover, what plea could he urge to his God, what excuse could he make to himself, for presuming upon the most precarious

rious of all tenures, a sickly and diseased life? He therefore "sets his house in order" instantly. He settles all his worldly affairs. And then he gives himself up to an actual preparation for that mysterious event, for which he has been habitually preparing himself before.

For this purpose he takes a review of his past life, and enters into a strict scrutiny of the general and prevailing spirit of it. He has regularly done this all along in life, as the several parts of it have gone over his head. At least he has done it for all that part of his life, which has passed since he begun to live up to the profession, and to act upon the principles, of a Christian. But it behoves him now to consider the whole with a closer examination, as he is now (he apprehends) soon to appear in the presence of a God, "who is of purer eyes than to behold" any unrepented "iniquity." And, in this solemn recall (as it were) of his departed hours from their graves, he sees probably many actions which give pain to his feeling mind, and

which, but for the blood of JESUS, would cast him into the bitterness of despair. His soul has long mourned in secret over them. His prayers have ascended with a fervency of penitence concerning them. And he has felt every reasonable assurance in his understanding and in his spirit, that the pardon of them has been long sealed to him by his GOD. He rejoices to think, that this work of repentance has not been deferred till the present moment, that the dreadful business has been long over, and that gladness has long since returned to bless his prayers and to animate his conduct. And he rejoices still more to see, that, under all his failings, his behaviour has been influenced by one general desire of approving himself to the Great Judge of man, and that he has gone on seriously and habitually in the way of goodness.

Fearful however, lest he should in the least degree deceive himself by the natural leanings of partiality, he sends probably for his Clergyman; especially if he thinks him actuated with a warm spirit of religion,
and

and has frequently found his exhortations reaching to his heart. Such a Clergyman will readily come at the call. And the sick man refers himself to him, to know his spiritual state truly. There can be no doubt, what answer the Clergyman will return. He will bid him not to droop in doubts, not to falter in hesitation, but to "enter" (as it were) already "into the joy of his Lord." And he will endeavour to make him do so, by every warm and spirited address in his power, by a communion of prayers with him, and by administering the great and supporting sacrament of the Body and Blood of his Redeemer to him. Thus cheered and thus supported, he feels his spirits rising more and more within him. And he looks forward to the worst which can befall him, with the calmness of a mind that has been long reconciled to her God, and with the contentedness of a soul that is fully affianced upon him.

In the mean time, we may suppose, his sickness becomes more and more dangerous.

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The countenances of his friends shew it. And he reads it without emotion. The natural fears of death, that hold thousands and ten thousands of the common children of earth in a state of bondage all their lives, have been long subdued in his soul by the elevating spirit of religion. He has even been long looking forward to the hour of his departure, as what was to set him free from this his apprenticeship (as it were) for Heaven, and so to give him up to the full enjoyment of liberty and manhood. And nothing, he has long considered, nothing but the strong hand of death can since the Fall open to us the gate of everlasting life. He has therefore learned to view the ground, where his body must be laid in dust, and to survey the abode, where his soul must be united to her kindred souls, not with horror but resignation, not with fear but hope, and not with dislike but satisfaction. He has learned to look upon his death as that grand event in his being, which is to end all the various troubles of earth, which is to close the long conflict he has had with his spiritual enemies, and at
once

once to assure him of, and bring to him in part, his great and eternal reward. And he therefore welcomes it with thanks. The weather-beaten sailor is now approaching to port. The soldier, exhausted with the fatigues of the campaign, is now retiring into quarters. And the Religious Soul, which has long been kept at a distance from her God, by the veil of human flesh, and by the cloud of human infirmities, is now hastening towards him. The veil of the flesh is gradually tearing asunder, to let her into the Holy of Holies beyond it. And the cloud of infirmities is as gradually brightening up before her into the light and lustre of Heaven.

Thousands have been the instances in all ages, of the very powerful influence of Christianity in smoothing the bed, and in animating the breast, of dying sickness. And wonderfully qualified it apparently is for doing so. Death became the King of Terroures to us, only in consequence of sin. It was the sin of the Fall, that gave him
his

his first dominion over us. And it is the influence of sin at present, which has raised him into what he is among the generality of mankind, as great a tyrant over the mind, as over the body, of man. But Christianity puts an end to Both, by destroying that influence and by taking away that sin. It takes away the sin of the Fall, ye know, by providing an atonement for it. It destroys the present influence of sin, by planting another spirit in the breast, and by raising us to higher and higher degrees of goodness. And where then are the remaining terrours of death? Nowhere surely to the Religious, except where nature has given a peculiar fearfulness of spirit, or where disease has pulled down the natural vigour of the mind, and either one or the other prevents the proper influence of religion on the soul. And Christianity has been known even to triumph frequently over Both, and to shed a lustre over the closing hour of those, who could not think of death without fear, or were worn down by continual pains.

The

The good man therefore, whose death I am now supposing, may well be allowed to shine out in all that true bravery, which religion so directly inspires. His soul approaches nearer and nearer to the confines of a happy Eternity. And he seems to partake more and more of the spirit that prevails there. What had once, very innocently and very properly, engaged his attentions and drawn out his affections, loses its hold by degrees, and sinks away before the superiour objects that now engross all his thoughts. He sees the world, which appears so great to the common spirits of the Earth, and which had long been considered as little by him, now shrinking up into nothing, and becoming merely as the dust of the balance in his judgment. Even the force of friendship, even the tenderness of love, that were once perhaps so strong, and twisted themselves about the finest strings of his heart, now begin to have not half their influence with him, and are yielding to a friendship and a love for God. A bright ray of Heaven darts in upon his rejoicing spirit. And he becomes
more

more and more like to the blessed society, to which he is going. In the secret exultation of his soul, he sees the Angels, that are said in Scripture to have carried the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's Bosom, all ready to conduct his own to the same mansion of happiness. In fancy perhaps he hears them crying to him, BROTHER SPIRIT, COME AWAY. In fancy perhaps he sees them opening wide the apartment of blessed souls, and introducing him among the happy number. And in fancy perhaps he also hears them all striking at once into a glorious concert of musick, to congratulate him upon his arrival among them, to take off any continuing remains of the pains of death about him, and to fit him at once for the pleasures of Paradise.

He thus perhaps dies in an extasy of joy too great for his enfeebled frame, and goes at once from the view to the enjoyment of this happiness. He then enters that pleasingly awful assembly of all the souls, that from the beginning of the world to the present moment have acted up to the intentions

tions of their Maker, and have gained the happiness which he had provided for them. He feels, no doubt, a secret transport of joy shooting across his soul, to find himself safely landed on the happy shore of Eternity. He receives their congratulations with increased joy. And he enters immediately into all their bliss.

What that bliss particularly is, we must not be too nice to enquire. Yet it is certainly of use to us, to have some positive and determinate notions concerning it. And it consists, as we have reason to think, in reviewing their past lives, re-tracing the ways of GOD's Providence in them, and forming thence more enlarged notions of the manner of GOD's proceedings with his creatures; in conversing with each other upon these and other subjects of religion, and in presenting prayers and praises to GOD for the past and for the future.

Thus employed, the late stranger from earth must feel a new spirit of joy springing
up

up in his soul. He looks back upon the course which he has so lately run in the world. He marks particularly those important days of his life, in which he first began to be truly religious, and so made his choice for a happy Eternity. These he reviews with a peculiar kind of satisfaction, as the great, the illustrious Birth-days of his being, as the days from which he dates all his happiness, as the time that was big with all the glories of Eternity. And he breathes a sigh of holy penitence over such moments since, as arise to his memory marked with sin. He now wonders at the strangeness of the enchantment, which in spite of himself, in spite of his views of religion, in spite of his habits of goodness, could so powerfully bind up his understanding, and turn away his heart, at times. And he enjoys a double pleasure from the consideration, that through so many snares from without, and amidst so many temptations from within, he has won his way successfully at last; and in a contest, which was for no less than an Eternity,

Eternity, in which he often faltered, and in which thousands are dreadfully failing every day, he has been finally victorious.

He speaks his joy probably to some of the Spirits about him. They tell him theirs. And they all join to admire the wisdom and goodness of God, in conducting his creatures safely through all the mazes of life, and leading them gradually through obedience to glory. They lament and wonder, that so many of their Brother-Spirits upon earth should still overturn every scheme of wisdom, and still defeat every purpose of goodness, for their salvation; and, while they are searching for happiness, should be plainly bent upon destruction, and desperately rushing into ruin. And with a rapture of pleasure they congratulate each other at every turn, That *they* were blessed with a just sense of things, That *they* had the grace to follow it, and That *they* have been led by it to the heights of Paradise.

In these moments of congratulation, how little must all those troubles and self-denials appear, which we are sure to meet with in a religious life! Those troubles, which once perhaps afflicted the spirit and wrung the heart of a young beginner in religion, when he found himself ridiculed by the world of sinners, when he saw himself shunned by those who had just religion enough not to dare to be singular in it, and when he heard himself branded for a Hypocrite by Both; these must now appear totally insignificant to the triumphing soul. And those self-denials which we are obliged to exercise, in refraining from every unfair, though alluring, temptation of interest, and in reining-in the strongest and most violent passions of our nature; all these, the mere "afflictions of a moment," appear to be nothing now in comparison with "that exceeding and eternal weight of glory," of which they are receiving a part in this the first stage of their reward.

The soul, that so lately came from earth, exults at the thought through all her feelings

ings of joy. She now finds herself for the first time in that particular situation, for which she was always designed by God. No doubts hang upon her spirits. No fears mingle with her pleasures. And she resigns herself up to the full enjoyment of them, without check and without apprehension. They are not the perishing satisfactions of a moment. No! They are to be as eternal as herself. They are not the poor joys of earth, calculated only to gratify the body, and almost unworthy of an Immortal Spirit. No! They are as spiritual as her own nature. They are the high-raised joys of Paradise. They are the highly relishing foretaste of Heaven. And they form the beginning of that wonderful period in our history, when we shall go on rising in goodness, and ascending in happiness, approaching nearer and nearer to God, and becoming more and more like to him, throughout the long successions of Eternity.

Such then are the joys that are now set before you. Such is the happiness which

ye have it in your power to obtain. And oh! remember, remember, that it is *yet* in your power, and that the hour will soon come when it will be no longer so. Ye may *yet* be happy for ever. But perhaps to-morrow ye cannot. Oh, think of this, and resolve to become religious to-day. Those Blessed Spirits, which were once on earth and are now in Paradise, are all earnestly wishing you to resolve upon this; are all earnestly praying that ye may; and; could they be allowed; would all come from their seats of joy to exhort you to do so. And let your Preacher's voice supply the want of theirs. Oh, hear *them* as speaking in *me*, and calling to you by every solemn and every tender tie, to trifle no longer about religion, but to seize the present moment, and to be as happy as they are. They are some of them, no doubt; your particular friends; they are some of them your dearest relations. The Father calls to his Children, and the Child to his Parents; Sisters call to Brothers, and Brothers to Sisters; Wives call to their Husbands, and Husbands to their Wives; they

all call from Eternity to you, to be religious in life, and so to be blessed afterwards. They want your company, to add even to the happiness of Paradise. For their sakes, as well as your own, they beseech you to bethink yourselves, while ye have time for thinking, and to make your decisive choice for Heaven immediately. Their souls yearn with more than mortal tenderness towards you. They feel a generous concern for you, superiour to what they ever felt on earth. Their thoughts are frequently flying back with a meltingness of affection to you, and are hovering (as it were) about the objects of their dearest regards on earth. They are infinitely desirous of your happiness. They long to see you among them. And they would spring forward with rapturous exultation, to greet you on your arrival there.

That ye may all of you give them an opportunity of doing this, is my fervent prayer for you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

S E R M O N V.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

I HAVE already dwelt sufficiently upon the former half of these words, and opened to you the nature of Death in all its awful and affecting circumstances. I shall therefore proceed to the other half at present, and enter upon that solemn hour of Judgment which is foretold to us in it. This is here declared to come after death; and it is to determine the fate of Soul and Body for ever. And a very alarming declaration it is. We are all deeply interested in it. Ye and I are equally to share in the allotments of that day of everlasting decision. And ye and I are equally concerned therefore, to know the wonderful particulars,

particulars, and to look forward to the astonishing consequences, of it.

Before the Fall indeed, the appointment of a formal judgment must have been totally unnecessary. It became necessary, only in consequence of the Fall. Had man lived on in a state of unfinning obedience, ever maintaining an intimacy of friendship with God, and ever kept up in a state of health and vigour by the fruit of the Tree of Life; he would have passed, as I have formerly told you, from this world to the next, without going through the grave and gate of death. He would have passed without any separation of soul and body, and without any form of a judgment, to the mansions of his everlasting residence. And the whole man would have been consigned, just as the Spiritual Part of him is now, at the hour of his summons into Eternity, to that particular allotment there which he had deserved by his conduct in life. But the Fall, of course, made a great change in the scheme of God's intended proceedings to man. Death entered into the

world; the soul was to be fearfully rent asunder from the body; and the one was to be laid in the grave, while the other was to be carried to a place peculiarly provided for it. There Both are to remain till the end of the world, when they shall again be united, and shall receive together their common sentence of approbation or condemnation for Eternity. And this sentence is to be passed with every circumstance of solemnity, that can strike the understanding, or impress the heart, of man.

One great and ruling reason for such a formal procedure on the part of God, is plainly this.—Ever since the Fall, the earth has been a mixt scene of Goodness and Badness. The wicked and the religious have been jumbled together, have fared equally well upon the fruits of the ground, and have thriven equally well under the influence of the sun. “The rain
“and the sun-shine have descended alike
“upon the just and the unjust.” And very frequently he who has neglected
God,

GOD, he who has despised his orders, he who has almost dared his threatenings, receives a greater portion of the good things of this world from the hand of GOD, than the Servant, the Friend, and the Favourite of GOD. That GOD should so act in distributing his favours, is absolutely necessary to the trial of a Fallen Being, who is in a state of purgation from his Fall, and who is training up under the discipline of Hope for Heaven. But then it is also necessary, That when this order of things, which has been brought on by the Fall, is put an end to by the end of the world, the very reverse of all this should immediately take place; That the Wicked should then see their wickedness openly in the sight of all the world resented and punished by GOD, and the Good should see their goodness as openly owned and rewarded by him; That the terrours of the Lord should be formally drawn up in a tremendous array against the former, and the loving-kindnesses of the Lord should be equally called out, in all their train of glory and happiness, towards the latter,

For

For this reason then, a formal day of Judgment became necessary after the Fall. For this reason also, it is to be conducted in the most solemn and awful manner. And it will be the most amazing event, that the eye of Men, that the eye of Angels, ever beheld. Oh, let us represent it in all its strongest imagery to our fancies. Let us bring it out in all its liveliest colours to our minds. And let us dwell with a fearful kind of satisfaction on the astonishing picture.

Let us suppose ourselves alive upon the earth, when that wonder of wonders shall begin to break upon the unexpected world. And let us suppose ourselves to see it proceed in the order, in which the Scripture tells us it shall do,

The first beginning of it will be with an Earthquake. "Lo," says St. John in the Revelations, "there was a great earthquake, and the Sun became black as sack-cloth of hair, and the Moon became as blood *." This, no doubt,

will be such a one as is spoken of in another part of Scripture, "such as was not
" since men were upon the face of the
" earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so
" great *." It will shake, we may suppose, the firm pillars of the earth from end to end, and make them "reel to and
" fro as a drunken man." And it will certainly, as the Scripture assures us, make
" every MOUNTAIN and ISLAND to be MO-
" VED OUT OF THEIR PLACES †." This will be the first grand sign of the end of nature. This will be the first great agony of the expiring world,—But what must be the confusion of the wicked inhabitants of earth, in these dreadful moments? We may conceive something of it, from the account which is given us by our blessed Saviour, and in the Book of Revelations. Then, as he says, shall be "upon the earth DIS-
" TRESS OF NATIONS, with PERPLEXITY;
" THE SEA AND THE WAVES ROARING;
" MENS HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR
" FEAR, AND FOR LOOKING AFTER
" THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE COMING

* Rev. xvi. 18.

† Rev. vi. 14.

“ ON THE EARTH *.” And, as St. John adds, then shall “ the kings of the earth, “ and the great men, and the rich men, “ and the chief captains, and the mighty “ men, and every bondman, and every “ freeman, hide themselves in the dens “ and in the rocks of the mountains,— “ from the face of him that is going to sit “ on the throne, and from the wrath of “ the Lamb †.” They see, they feel the whole scene of amazement, that has been so long foretold, now bursting upon them, all unprepared for it. In the hurry and distraction of their sinful souls, they shall flee from the towns that are tottering on every side, and threatening instantly to bury them alive; and shall take shelter in the country. But they will still find the same avenging power of God pursuing them thither, and the ground still shaking under it to its deepest foundations.—They shall then run from the quaking vallies to the hills, or they shall run from the labouring hills to the vallies. Yet they shall find no

* Luke xxi, 25—26.

† Rev. vi, 15—16.

refuge, no security from the strong terrors that oppress their souls. The valleys shall seem ready, every moment, to sink and open under them. And the hills shall seem as ready to cast off their masses of earth, and bury half the world under their ruins.—They will probably endeavour therefore to escape from the unsteady footing of the land, and to find rest for the sole of their feet upon the waters. But there a more than equal train of terrors will meet them. “THE SEA AND THE WAVES WILL BE ROARING.” The same stroke from the arm of GOD will give a still greater force to the water, than to the land. The seas and the ocean will be all in an outrageous commotion from it; rearing their heads to Heaven, and threatening to swallow up the land immediately. And “every island” within them will even be “moved out of its place,” before the tempestuous violence of the waters. They had fearfully run to the seas to save them: but the seas present a more horrible picture of frightfulness than the land. They run back therefore with a consternation,

nation, that overcomes their former terrors. And they sit down at last (we may suppose) in a kind of stupidity from their overpowering fears, submitting to what they cannot avoid, and gazing half-senseless at the host of terrors around them. Where is now that wretched confidence of the Sinner, with which he used to look down upon the Religious? Where is the jest, that he had once so ready to point at Piety? Where is the ridicule, which he has so often played off upon Sanctity? All, all are fled. The boldest Sinner now trembles in every nerve, and envies the composure of the man whom he once affected to despise. He would now be happy to exchange situation and spirit, with the weakest child of religion that ever he vented his spite upon. And he throws himself on the ground, we may suppose, hiding his face in the dust, and unable to look up from the very sinking of his soul within him. The world, in his knowledge of which he once trusted, is now breaking into ruins under him. The multitude of sinners, in which he once boasted, are all

now in the same abject condition with himself. And he is going to be delivered over with them to still superiour terrors.

Then will follow probably, what is so strikingly brought before our eyes in the Book of Revelations. "I saw," says St. John, "a mighty Angel come down from Heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rain-bow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the Sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:—and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth:—and he lifted up his hand to Heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created Heaven and the things that therein are, and the Earth and the things that therein are, and the Sea and the things which are therein, THAT THERE SHOULD BE TIME NO LONGER *." How formidably particular is this description! We see the mighty Angel, to whom is given the commission of pronouncing the fate of Na-

* x. 1, 2, 5, and 6.

ture, descending from Heaven on the solemn errand. A cloud half-wraps him round. A rain-bow extends in an arch about his head. All the brightness of the sun beams forth in his countenance. And his legs shine out like two pillars of fire. With this amazing appearance of glory, he comes down to the earth. He fixes his right foot on the ocean; and finds a firm footing, even, on the tops of its tossing waves. He then sets his left upon the land. He thus bestrides half the globe. And in this majestic posture we see him lifting up his hand to Heaven, in the ancient manner of those who took a solemn oath; and awfully swearing by the GOD of Heaven and Earth, THAT TIME SHOULD BE NO MORE.

How must all the circumstances of this grand act affect the beholding children of men! How much must they add to the terrours of the Sinners particularly, now perhaps relieved from the earthquake, and just venturing to look up to the threatening face of Heaven. And with what an increasing

increasing fright must he see the Angel coming down from thence with a cloud and with a rainbow, and a new Day (as it were) arising in the firmament. How must he be astonished to see him approaching nearer and nearer, setting one of his flaming feet upon the seas, and stretching the other to the land! And how much more must he be astonished, as he beholds him raising his hand to Heaven in the act of swearing, and as he hears him swear by the tremendous name of GOD, **THAT TIME SHALL BE NO MORE!** These words will go to the bottom of his sinful soul. They will destroy every fond remains of the hope, with which he flattered himself in his heart, That the earthquake was not the immediate fore-runner of the Judgment. They will convince him to the full assurance of all his fears, That this hour of dread and destruction is rushing directly upon him.

Time is now no more. It has now compleated its assigned course. It began with the world, and the world must end

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with

with it. The sun and the moon, that have measured out time to us, and were originally made "to be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years," are now wanted no longer. That awful circle of ages is finished, for which God created the Heavens and the Earth. And those important moments are arrived, which have been so carefully concealed in the councils of God, and kept even from the knowledge of Angels. The Heavens and the Earth, once so beautiful a workmanship of God's, but since deformed by the sin of man, and yet even then shewing wonderful marks of wisdom and goodness, are now to be destroyed. They are to be struck out of the list of the creations of God. And the space, which they fill in the universe, is to be reduced to the condition in which it stood before the beginning of the world. The voice of the mighty Angel has given the signal. And the instruments of destruction are going to enter upon the work.

The

The earth has been formerly destroyed by a flood. But it is now to be destroyed by fire. And this destruction will be much more compleat than that was. That extended only to the earth on which we live. This will reach even to the Heavens over our heads. That left even the earth fit to be inhabited afterwards. But this will reduce the whole frame of nature, the Heavens and the earth, to a mere heap of ruins; and turn the whole creation to a cinder. And God has his stores of fire reserved in their proper cells for the day, ready to burst forth at the word of command, and purge the mass of matter around us of the stains it has contracted from the sins of man. The Angel has now given the word. They instantly burst forth. And the General Fire begins.

“ The earth, and the works that are therein, are now burning up;” as St. Peter prophesied they should be *. A fire is lighted up in “ the four corners of the

* 2 Peter, iii. 10.

"earth" at once. And the flames are hastening to meet all together in the center. The works of art, the works of nature, all sink before them. The solid earth itself is perishing every moment in the fires. Half of it is already gone. And the rest will be gone in a few moments. Where, where are the Buildings, that once adorned the face of the ground, and were peculiarly the pride of our own island? Where are the Mountains, that once stretched their long ridges across the globe? Where are the Seas, that once surrounded the whole earth, and beat upon our own shores? They are not to be found. "Their place knoweth them no more." They are all as if they had never been.

But this destruction (as I observed before) is not confined merely to the earth. The sins of man have tainted all the air; have spread an infection over all the elements, and have breathed a corruption even over all the firmament. And they are therefore to be equally purged by fire. The flames of earth (we may suppose)
will

will spread in a mighty blaze to the skies, and so set fire to the wonderful canopy over us. "The Heavens," we are expressly told by St. Peter, "shall be on fire and be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat *." And what a dreadful addition will this make to the whole, the earth all one vast circle of fire below, and the sky all one vast covering of flames above, a most tremendous monument of the wrath and justice of God? Where is now the Sun, that for so many thousands of years has distributed his light to the world? Where is now the Moon, that has so happily supplied his place, while absent? And where are now the Stars, that have so frequently made up to us the want of Both? Alas! "the heaven" itself is "departing" before the flames, even "as a scroll when it is rolled together †." It is now "passing away with a great noise †." It is actually gone. And the whole extent of Heaven and earth is no more.

* ii. iii. 10—12.

† Rev. vi. 14.

‡ 2 Peter, iii. 10.

Here then let us pause a while, and make one useful and heartfelt reflection over the ashes of our departed world.

Ye have seen the last struggles (as it were) of universal nature. Ye have been present to the concluding scene of Heaven and Earth. And oh ! let the awful representation be never blotted from your minds. Ye have been introduced to such discoveries of amazement and terrou, as must chill the breast of sinfulness even to the very soul. Ye have seen it burst out upon the unexpected world in a dreadful earthquake, that shook the globe to its center, and made the foundations of the earth to seem like stubble. Ye have seen the commissioned Angel descending from Heaven, fixing his feet upon the ocean and the land, and swearing by the dread name of God, **THAT TIME SHALL BE NO MORE.** And ye have seen the destruction of Time and the world instantly taking place, the destroying fires beginning, spreading over the face of the Earth, and even involving the whole Heavens above us in the general ruin.

ruin. May ye have beheld all this to its only useful purpose! May these striking images stick close to your souls, and be habitually present to your minds! And may they thus serve as a strong bias of religion upon your hearts, making you ever serious about the grand business of life, and putting you upon an instant, a continued, an earnest preparation for these astonishing events!

Grant, O blessed Lord God, that this may be the happy consequence, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

S E R M O N VI.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

IN my last discourse to you, I brought before your eyes the whole of that striking event, the General Destruction of the world. I went on with this subject through all its parts, that ye might feel it in all its terrors. And I hope it spoke to your hearts in a language, which will not easily be forgotten. I am sure, it spoke to mine in very powerful terms, while I was delivering it to you.

But I shall now go back to what I purposely omitted to describe at the time, the grand formality of Judgment. This will come in between the parts of that General Destruction,

Destruction, which I described so particularly in my last. It must certainly take place before "the earth and the works that are therein are burned up," and before "the Heavens shall be on fire and be dissolved." A flaming world, or a world reduced to ashes, will be no proper stage for the solemnity of Judgment. And it will come in, I presume, immediately before the general firing of the Heavens and the Earth. Thus, as I shewed you last Sunday, a wonderful earthquake shall shake the solid globe from end to end, and so give strong intimations of its approaching ruin. Then, as I also shewed you, an Angel shall descend from Heaven in the sight of all the world, cloathed with a cloud, and with a rain-bow about his head; his face shining out with the brightness of the sun, and his feet appearing like two pillars of fire. With this appearance, he shall be seen to set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the land; and shall be heard to swear by the dread name of GOD, THAT TIME SHALL BE NO MORE. Instantly upon this, I suppose, "the sun
" will

“ will become black as sack-cloth of hair,
 “ and the moon become as blood, and the
 “ stars of Heaven will fall unto the earth,
 “ even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely
 “ figs, when she is shaken of a mighty
 “ wind *.” And then, then will come
 the Judgment. That this will be the order
 of things at that awful day, I suppose from
 our Saviour’s account of it in St. Mark’s
 and St. Luke’s Gospels. “ In those days,”
 he says, “ the sun shall be darkened, and
 “ the moon shall not give her light; and
 “ the stars of Heaven shall fall, and the
 “ powers that are in Heaven shall be
 “ shaken; and THEN shall they see the
 “ Son of Man coming †.” And, as he
 speaks more circumstantially in St. Luke,
 there “ shall be signs in the sun, and in
 “ the moon, and in the stars; and upon
 “ the earth distress of nations, with per-
 “ plexity; the sea and the waves roaring;
 “ mens hearts failing them for fear, and
 “ for looking after those things which are
 “ coming on the earth: for the powers of
 “ Heaven shall be shaken: and THEN

* Rev. vi. 12, 13.

† Mark xiii. 24—26.

“ shall

“ shall they see the Son of Man coming *.”

Then shall HE come once more from Heaven, who has been here before, even the Blessed JESUS. He formerly made his appearance upon earth, as the mildly majestic instructor of our understanding, and as the gracious but dignified restorer of our nature. He has since resided in Heaven, and sat at the right hand of GOD the Father, ever making intercession for us, and endeavouring to perfect his wonderful kindnesses towards us. And he is now coming to compleat the whole scheme of his astonishing concerns with us, by summoning before him all the race of man, all that have ever been in life from the beginning to the end of Time, and pronouncing their everlasting doom.

The first appearance of his coming will be what he himself calls “ THE SIGN of “ the Son of Man.” “ The Sun,” he says, “ shall be darkened, and the moon

* Luke xxi. 25—27.

“ shall

“ shall not give her light, and the stars
“ shall fall from Heaven, and the powers
“ of the Heavens shall be shaken: and
“ then shall appear the Sign of the Son of
“ Man in Heaven *.” This in all probability will be a great Cross of Light, appearing in the sky, and telling the approach of the mighty Saviour of the world to judge it. Ever since his death upon the cross, this has been the grand appointed badge of his religion, and so will form the properest signal of his coming. This awful ensign of the Redeeming God will appear probably, as borne up by some of the Angels, and going before the rest of the train. And it will probably throw a strong light over all the now darkened compass of Heaven and earth, and even serve as a kind of occasional sun to enlighten the whole solemnity.

Next will follow, we may suppose, a vast multitude of Angels. Angels shall certainly attend “ the Judge of all the

* Mat. xxiv. 29, 30.

“ earth”

“earth” upon this the execution of his office. He himself has expressly assured us, That in these moments “all the Holy “Angels shall come with him *.” And what a train of pomp and grandeur must they make! All the processions, that we have seen or heard of upon earth, will be merely the parades of children in comparison with this. It shall be made up, not of Nobles, not of Kings, not of Emperours, but of Beings greatly superiour to all, of Angels; of Beings, who have already passed their hour of trial, and are fixed in a happiness which never can be lost; of Beings, each of whom is able, by a single stroke of his arm, to lay whole hosts in the dust at once; and of Beings, who have the honour to be the peculiar Friends, and the distinguished Favourites, of God.

Then will come the Dread Judge of All. He will appear in the same human form, in which he conversed so familiarly with us upon earth. The same body that

* Mat. xxv. 31.

suffered

suffered on the cross, and that was afterwards raised from the grave, shall now make its appearance again, united (as before) to the Godhead, and sharing in all its Divinity. But oh ! how changed, how different, will he appear from him, who suffered himself to be bound, to be scourged, to be spit upon, and to be crucified. He is no longer the suffering JESUS, “ a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” He comes now “ with power and great glory *.” He comes “ in his own glory and in his Father’s †.” He comes in all the dignity and pomp of the Godhead, to execute one of the greatest and grandest works, that even the eye of God himself, perhaps, has ever beheld.

On this work he appears, “ coming in the clouds of Heaven †.” “ Then,” says our Saviour, “ shall all the tribes of the earth mourn †.” And, as St. John adds, “ Behold ; He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him — ; and all

* Mat. xxiv. 30.

† Luke ix. 26.

‡ Mat. xxiv. 30.

“ kindreds

“ kindreds of the earth shall wail because
“ of him *.” Encompassed as they stand
with a horrible darkness, the Heavens all
one black cloud, and the earth all one mid-
night gloom; the mere children of the
earth, the sons and daughters of sin, shall
look up to the new wonders, that are open-
ing upon them from the sky, with amaze-
ment, with wildness, with distraction.
With amazement shall they see the sign of
the Son of Man advancing in the clouds,
and casting a strong lustre over all the air.
With wildness shall they behold the crowds
of Angels, all issuing from the gates of
Heaven, and glorying in their attendance
upon their Lord. And with distraction
shall they view the face of the adorable
JESUS himself, once their Saviour, once
their Mediator, but now their Judge, their
Condemner, and their Punisher.

Yet, while this is the case with those
who have forgotten God (as it were),
because he was seemingly absent from them;
who have overlooked him in the Creation,

* Rev. i. 7.

because He did not come forward to their senses; very different will be the feelings of the serious and the devout, of those who have long lamented their own weaknesses in secret, and have been every day conversing affectionately with their God in prayer. They will look up to the awful intimations of his coming with pleasure. They will "lift up their heads" with joy. They will see with rapture, That the day of "their Redemption," the day which is to reward them for all their troubles and self-denials, the day which is to begin a period of un-interrupted and un-mingled happiness to them, is now arrived at last. They will hail with high satisfaction the standard of "the captain of their salvation," as it begins to appear in the sky. They will congratulate themselves on the sight of the Angels, coming now for the last time to "minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation." And they will dwell with transport on the view of their All-Gracious Master, now "coming in the clouds of Heaven, and bringing his reward with him."

Thus

Thus beheld with different eyes, and accompanied with thousands and “ten thousands of his saints*,” the Judge descends towards this lower world. And he descends, as St. Paul assured us he would, “with a shout, with the voice of “the archangel, and with the trump of “God†.”—The whole attending Host of Heaven set up a shout, at this the grand accomplishment of the designs of Providence. These “Sons of God,” as we are expressly told in Job, “shouted for “joy” at the creation of the world. And they equally shout for joy now, at the destruction of it. The end, for which it was made, is fully answered. And the glory of God, the principal aim and object of these highly-thinking spirits, has been amply displayed in its continuance. But what, must we think, will be the force and effect of a shout, raised by such an innumerable multitude, set up by “all “the Angels of Heaven?” Millions and millions of mere men could never equal it.

* Jude xiv.

† 1 Thess. iv. 16.

It must found therefore “ as the voice of
 “ mighty thunderings *,” and shake the
 whole frame of Heaven and Earth. It
 shall even enter into the depths of the
 earth, and into the caverns of the ocean.
 And it shall rouse all the sleeping bodies
 of the Dead there into second life.—Then
 the grand Archangel, who is to direct (we
 may suppose) the form and ceremony of
 this astonishing work, will lift up his sin-
 gle voice ; and with the same power, with
 which our Saviour once cried out to the
 deceased Lazarus, will probably bid them
 all come forth from their graves.—And
 then a blast from the Trumpet of God
 will bring them instantly before their
 Judge.

This general shout, that single call, and
 the summons from the Trump, are all
 stiled in one passage of Scripture THE
 VOICE OF THE SON OF MAN. “ All
 “ that are in the graves,” it is said in St.
 John, “ shall hear his voice, and shall

* Rev. xix. 6.

“ come forth ; they that have done good,
“ unto the resurrection of life, and they
“ that have done evil, unto the resurrec-
“ tion of damnation *.” And let us dwell
a little more particularly on this amazing
scene.

The earth, which ever since the Fall
has been the common burying-place of all
its children, and is so fully stored with
mould that has once been human, will
now surrender up the bodily remains which
have been committed to it. The dust of
the ground will appear quickening on
every side. And the whole surface of the
earth, almost, will be full of life. Bodies
will be seen springing every where under
the feet of the living, throwing up the
ground before them as they rise, and
breaking away from their graves. And
bodies, that had lain for ages upon ages in
the earth, and were buried perhaps by the
flood of Noah below the weights of the
hills, and under the bottoms of the moun-

* John v. 28, 29.

tains, all hear the general call, all burst from their secret cells, and all come forth to Judgment. The sea also becomes fruitful as well as the land, and sends forth the bodies that have been intrusted to it. They start from the caverns in which they had slept there, below the roarings of the waters. They are rising (as it were) in every wave. And they join their revived brethren of the land. "The sea," says St. John, who saw all this in an actual vision, "the sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death and Hell gave up the Dead which were in them *."

But the quickening sound of that shout of Angels, of that voice of the Archangel, and of that blast from the Trump of God, shall not be confined in its power even to the earth or to the sea. It shall reach beyond the bounds of this world, and shall enter even into the place of departed Spirits. And it shall summon all the souls from thence, to return once more upon

* Rev. xx. 13.

earth, and to be once more united to their bodies. They shall leave their abodes. They shall repair again to the world. They shall find their old companions of clay ready prepared for them. And they shall again take up their residence in them. This St. John means, when he says that HELL shall deliver up the Dead that are in it. HELL there means, as I have formerly told you it does in some other passages of Scripture, not the Place of the Devils and Damned Souls, but the general abode for all the departed Spirits of men, from the hour of their departure to the hour of the Resurrection. And this HELL shall now pour forth all its numerous souls, and send them back to the bodies from which they were taken.

With singular joy and satisfaction must the Souls of the Pious hear the sound of the Archangel's trumpet, ecchoing through all the House of Spirits, and calling them away to Judgment. They have long been hoping for the day. They have long been praying it to be hastened. And it is now

come at last. They spring forward with peculiar activity, we may suppose, to join those bodies of theirs, which were originally made by GOD for their happiness, and from which they were separated by the consequences of the Fall. They are conducted to them by Angels probably. And the two parts of Man are happily restored to each other again.

But very different will be the feelings of the Souls of the Wicked, in their place of confinement. Every imprisoned Spirit there must start with horror at the sound. It is a call to shame and contempt, in the eye of the whole world. It is a call to disgrace and infamy, before all the assembled Angels. It is a call to justice, to condemnation, to punishment, from the hand of GOD himself. They have frequently fancied it sounding in their ears before. They have been spending their time, ever since their departure out of the body, in a fearful and trembling expectation of it. And their expectation is now too sadly confirmed, and all their fears are
turned

turned into mournful certainties. The sound, no doubt, shoots in an agony of pain through every soul, as it runs round the walls of their prison-house. Every one of them will linger to obey the call. They shrink back with terrour, at the thoughts of a re-union with their bodies, once the partners of their guilt, and now to be the companions of their sufferings. And, dreadful as their situation has been since they left their bodies, they would willingly stay where they are, rather than face the horrors of the hour of Judgment. But all their backwardness is in vain. The day of chusing has long been over with them. They wilfully chose Evil, when they might have chosen Good. And they must now abide by the consequence. Some of those very Devils probably, who have drawn them into sin, are now made by God to be their punishers in part. The Good Angels are said in Scripture to minister unto the heirs of Salvation; and the Bad Angels must minister therefore unto the heirs of Destruction. And these in all probability come, drag them away, force

them to rejoin their bodies, and then push them on to their place of trial.

• Oh, think what must be the consternation of these Sinful Souls at that moment. Think of it, thou Sinner, wheresoever thou art, and tremble. Think of it, thou that allowest thyself in any known sin. Oh think that thou mayest share in this very consternation, and that thou probably wilt. Oh think of this, and then lull thy soul into slumbers, if thou canst. One unrepented sin of commission, one wilful departure from the laws of God, may send thee all off thy guard into Eternity, and may bring thee thus lingering, thus shrinking back, thus full of consternation, before the face of thy Judge. And, should that be the case, how wilt thou regret thy unthinkingness, how wilt thou condemn thy folly, how wilt thou curse thy stupidity, in life! How wilt thou remember, with biting remorse of heart, That thou hadst been earnestly warned of all these terrors which are now come upon thee, That thou hadst them all set in terrible
array

array before thee from the Pulpit, and That thou hadst been warmly and urgently admonished to take shelter from them in religion. And with what a deep dismay of soul wilt thou recollect every serious and soul-felt address, that has been made to thee from this place.

Happy indeed will it be for thee then, if such had never been made. Happy, if thou hadst been totally ignorant of this tremendous hour of Judgment, and hadst never been taught to expect it. And happy even, if thou hadst never been instructed in any other principle of Christianity, if thou hadst never known the Glorious Scheme of the Gospel, if thou hadst never heard of the name of thy Redeemer. Thy conduct has turned all these blessings away from thee. It has made the gracious favours of Heaven to become thy condemnation. It has made even the Gospel of Love to prove thy destruction. And it has forced thy Redeemer himself, He who melted in pity over thy fate, He who bowed the Heavens and came down to
make

make thee happy, He who endured the distresses of poverty, the pains of shame, and the pangs of death to save thee; it has forced even this Lord of Mercies, and this Father of all Kindnesses, now to put on the majesty of a Judge, and to exercise the severity of an Enemy, against thee. Terrible indeed will be that majesty, and dreadful that severity, to thee. A wicked Heathen may have some excuse for his sins. But for thee, for a wicked Christian, there remains nothing at the hour of account, but “a fearful looking for of Judgment, “and of Fiery Indignation, which shall “devour” and swallow thee up to all Eternity.

From this horrible situation mayest thou concur with GOD to save thyself, before the time comes when thou shalt not be able to do it; for thy own sake. And may GOD, not yet provoked to the utmost by thy sins, concur with thee in this necessary business, for the sake of thy Saviour Jesus Christ.

S E R-

S E R M O N VII.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

HAVING laid before you the day of Judgment in part, I shall now proceed to describe to you the remainder. And may it make an impression on your heart and on mine, somewhat equal to the greatness and grandeur of the subject, to the high interest that ye and I have in it, and to the astonishing consequences of it to us Both,

With the multitudes of the Dead, that will be raised from their rest in the depths of the earth or in the caverns of the ocean, and be presented before the throne of Christ, shall the living inhabitants of the world,

world, the millions that stand struck with wonder at all this amazing scene of things in their eyes, be presented before the same throne. Both shall come together to the Judgment-seat. And Both shall there receive their sentence together. This appears from the accounts which St. Paul gives us in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians: “ I would not have you to be “ ignorant,” he says, “ concerning them “ which are asleep,” that is, which are dead : “ For this we say unto you by the “ Word of the Lord, That we which are “ alive, and remain unto the coming of “ the Lord, shall not prevent,” that is, shall not go before, “ those which are asleep.” But “ we—shall be caught up together “ with them in the clouds, to meet the “ Lord in the air *.” The dead disciples of religion, he says, shall be as readily brought before their Saviour-Judge, as the living. And if this will be the case with the Good, it will be equally so with the Bad. The wicked Dead shall not be be-

* iv. 13. 15. 17.

hind the wicked Living in their appearance at that throne of horror. And Both shall stand together there, trembling at what they see before their eyes, and shuddering at what they know to be coming on them.

When the earth and the sea have delivered up all the stores of Human Dust, which have been ever lodged in their cells; and when HELL, or the place of departed Spirits, has sent forth the vast multitude of Human Souls, which have been kept in its large abodes; and when all the generations of the Dead shall once more stand upon this earth of ours: then shall they and the Living “be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” The whole immense body of men and women, all that have ever trod the surface of this globe, all that have ever risen into life from the first creation of the world to that period of its close, all, all shall then be caught up into the clouds. The Angels certainly, the Devils probably, will be employed in this great work. And what an amazing appearance will it make! All that

that have filled the pages of history with their actions ; all that GOD's own history in the Bible speaks of, all that histories written by mere men notice ; and the millions upon millions, that are not noticed by either ; all are now mounting from the earth, which has long been the busy stage of their deeds, and all are going to be judged for them. Their numbers probably are beyond all the possible computations of man. They can only be reckoned up by the Arithmetick of GOD. And what a wonderful Flight of Beings must they make, as they spring from the earth, as they rise higher and higher in the air, and as they gradually approach the Judgment-Seat of Christ.

This seat is now fixed. And it is fixed, not upon the earth, but in the air above. St. Paul has already told us, ye observe, that we shall be all caught up together into the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. In the air therefore will his throne be fixed. And in the air will all these numbers beyond number be presented before him.

They find a firm footing in the clouds. Even the Throne itself stands as firmly upon them, as on the central pillars of the globe. Their bodies, in the instant they were raised from the graves, or in the moments they were caught up from the earth, have undergone a very extraordinary change, and are become spiritualized and refined. "We shall not all sleep," says St. Paul, meaning that we shall not all die before the end of the world, "but shall all
" be CHANGED, in a moment, in the
" twinkling of an eye, at the last trump;
" for the trumpet shall sound, and the
" Dead shall be raised incorruptible, and
" we shall be CHANGED; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and
" this mortal must put on immortality." Hence it appears, that both the Dead and the Living shall have their bodies equally changed by some sudden and secret working upon them, at the last Trump. They shall become by it fitted for the new abodes to which they are now to be assigned, and so be as capable of treading on air as the Angels themselves. And the whole multitude

tude (we may suppose) will appear arranged in the air, filling its ample spaces from end to end, and stretching in one vast circle around the throne of Judgment.

This is represented in Scripture as “a “Great White Throne*.” It will be such a Seat of Judgment, no doubt, as was never erected upon earth. The throne of the highest Emperours will be merely as the turf-seat of a peasant, in comparison with it. And it will be, it seems, an awful State-chair of Light. Light will form the Body of it. Light will form the Seat and the Steps. And the whole will appear as one dazzling throne of light. We are here told, ye see, that it will be a white throne. And in Daniel we are assured, that it will be “like the fiery flame, and “its wheels as burning fire;” and that “a fiery stream shall issue and come forth “before it †.”

Mounted on this, will appear the Judge of all the world. And his appearance will

* Rev. xx. 11.

† vü. 9, 10.

be full of majesty, power, and terrour. St. John, who saw all these things in that kind of vision, of which I am endeavouring to give you and myself some faint resemblance, says thus concerning the Judge particularly. " I saw a Great White
" Throne, and HIM that sat on it, from
" whose face the Earth and the Heaven
" fled away, and there was found no place
" for them; and I saw the Dead, small
" and great, stand before GOD * " No words can more strongly describe than these do, the dread and formidable appearance of the GOD-MAN, as seated on the Circle of the Sky, and preparing to judge mankind. The Earth and the Heaven, it is said, " FLED AWAY FROM HIS FACE,
" AND THERE WAS FOUND NO PLACE
" FOR THEM." In these moments of Judgment, the whole creation will be all covered with darkness, except what issues from the Cross and Throne of Light. It will be all trembling probably to its immediate destruction. And it will be ready to drop instantly into nothing, as soon as the

* Rev. xx. 11—12.

Judgment is over.—But when nature shakes through all her frame at the sight of his countenance, what must be the impression from it upon the Souls of the Sinners, shuddering as they all stand before him, having the terrors of his eye directly bent upon them, and having the lightening of his countenance flashing immediately at them?

Thus seated on “the throne of his glory *,” and seeing “all nations gathered before him *,” He shall open the Books of Memorial, which have been carefully kept by God, and which contain the transactions, the thoughts, and the characters of every the most trifling individual among men. These, the sure and unerring records of Heaven, are now to be solemnly opened. And every man is to receive his sentence, according to what is registered there. “I saw,” says St. John, “the Dead, small and great, stand before God; the Books were opened;—and the Dead were judged out of those things

* Mat. xxv, 31 and 32.

“ which

“ which were written in the Books, according to their works *.” Such registers cannot be necessary in themselves to God. His mind, to which things past, present, and to come are all equally near, and which remembers the slightest transaction that passed a thousand ages ago, as readily as one that happened only a minute since; this must furnish him with the knowledge of every thing necessary to Judgment. But God is frequently pleased, as in this case, not merely to use expressions that lie most level to our understandings, and best serve to explain his awful powers to us; but even to act in such a manner, as shall strike most upon our minds in the reading, and be most affecting to our spirits in the seeing. Thus he keeps an exact account of all the behaviour of men, and has kept one for all the generations that have risen and fallen since the days of Adam. And thus he will produce these wonderful histories at the end of the world, and all mankind “ shall be judged

* Rev. xx. 12.

“ out of those things which are written in
“ the Books, according to their works.”
A part of these histories has been already
given us in the Bible, in the relations and
characters of the Good and Bad which we
meet with there. The whole will be then
read to the attending worlds of Men and
Angels. And every character will stand
forth in its true colours. The disguises
which ignorance, which partiality, which
the spirit of the world, are perpetually
throwing over the characters of persons
around us, will be all taken away by the
certain hand of GOD. And the man will
appear as he really was. The hypocrite
will be stript to the skin, and shewn to the
world in all his naked ugliness. And the
man who dreadfully fancied all religion to
be hypocrisy, who at least considered al-
most every outward appearance of it to be
so, and who was particularly careful to
banish it from conversation, and to keep it
out of company; such a man as this, the
frequent creature of the present times, will
find himself put down in those Rolls of
Truth, either as a blasphemer against the
majesty

majesty of religion, and a direct enemy to GOD and Godliness; or at least as a poor mean wretch, that was ashamed of his GOD, and afraid to acknowledge him.

But let us suppose, That we see the Books opened at this instant, That we now hear them read aloud to us, and that we are every moment in dreadful or in hopeful expectation of coming to the parts which concern ourselves. The grand Archangel, who lifted up his single voice to summon the Dead from their graves, is perhaps employed in reading them. And, at the close of every character, a kind of preparatory Judgment is pronounced by the GOD-MAN. Let us also suppose, that we see this very striking description of him, which is given us by Daniel, actually presented to our eyes. “The Antient of
“days did sit, whose garment was white
“as snow, and the hair of his head like
“pure wool; his Throne was like the
“Fiery Flame, and its Wheels as Burn-
“ing Fire; a Fiery Stream issued and
“came forth before him: thousand thou-

“lands ministered unto him, and ten
 “thousand times ten thousand stood be-
 “fore him: The Judgment was set, and
 “the Books were opened *.” These
 Books are described in Scripture as con-
 sisting of several, which contain the trans-
 actions of all good and of all bad men in
 life, and of another, which bears only the
 names of the Good recorded in it. “The
 “Books were opened,” says St. John;
 “and another Book was opened, which is
 “the Book of Life; and the Dead were
 “judged out of those things which were
 “written in the Books, according to their
 “works; and whosoever was not found
 “written in the Book of Life was cast
 “into the lake of fire †.” In another
 passage of Scripture the wicked are spoken
 of as those, “whose names are not writ-
 “ten in the Book of Life of the Lamb
 “slain from the foundation of the world ‡.”
 And, when the history of each man’s life
 has been read, and the larger Books have
 determined his actions; the smaller one is

* vii. 9—10.

† Rev. xiii. 8.

‡ Rev. xx. 12 and 15.

to determine his fate. If his name remains inserted within it by the hand of God, he is pronounced Good. If not, he is pronounced Bad. And then shall take place the separation, of which our Saviour informs us in St. Matthew's Gospel; declaring, that in the day of Judgment he "shall separate them one from another, "as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from "the Goats; and he shall set the Sheep "on his right hand, but the Goats on the "left *." As each character is read from the larger Books, and as it is proclaimed whether his name is found in the Book of Life or not; the mixed multitude will begin to separate, every individual will go off to the right or left, and the vast circle around the throne of the Judge will gradually break away into two distinct bodies, one of the Good on his right hand, and the other of the Bad on his left. And let us suppose, that we now see all this in others, and that we now feel it in ourselves.

* xxv. 32—33.

What then must be the thoughts of every wicked Spirit amongst us, in that moment of decision for eternity? How shall the Drunkard, how shall the Fornicator, how shall the profane Swearer appear, as he hears all the sins of his life called forth into open view, and as he finds himself obliged to join the lamenting train on the left. Conscious of the sinful tenour of his days, sensible of his late allotment among the souls of the unhappy, he shall shake and quiver with affright, as he hears his own history just going to be begun. He shall be bowed down with an inexpressible weight of terrors on his spirits, when he hears his offences singled out one by one. And he will wish to shrink into himself, from the innumerable eyes that will be fixed upon him, and particularly from the pointing eye of his God and of his Judge. Every act, that once gave him pleasure, now pays him with horror in the relation. Every offence now carries a dagger to his heart. Every sin now becomes a fresh brand (as it were)

to the fire that is lighting up within him. And, when he is ordered to go off to the left, he sinks half-dead with consternation at the sound. Think of this, thou Drunkard. Think of this, thou Fornicator. Think of this, thou Profane Swearer.

Nor will the terrors of that moment be confined to the more open sinner. They will extend to the unhappy many, that, in the strangely prevailing indevotion of the human heart at present, can rise from the bed of sleep in the morning, or lie down upon it in the evening, without any devotions at all. This character, I am afraid, takes in numbers amongst you, my Brethren, numbers, who appear decent in their general conduct, and numbers, who attend upon Publick Prayer. And Oh! let me tell you, what must necessarily be your reception at this searching period of trial. You will then repent, in agony of soul repent, of every neglect of private devotion. The hours of morning and evening, that have so often passed over your heads without their proper accompaniment

niment of prayer, will then appear written in everlasting characters upon the Books of God, and will be proclaimed aloud as with the voice of a trumpet. And your horrid custom of Indevotion will be seen by yourself to have levelled you at the time with the beasts that perish, and will now level you with the worst of sinners. The eye of your Judge will give a double force to every reflection, and make (as it were) a sword to go through your very soul. And You, who flattered yourself perhaps, and was flattered by others, that you was religious enough, will find yourself to your amazement and your woe commanded to stand on the left, and to share the miserable fate of the Profligate.

Oh, think of this, whosoever thou art, that ever neglectest the regular returns of Private Prayer. Think of this, ere it be too late to think about it at all. When once thy soul becomes familiarized to the neglect of thy prayers, it grows more and more hardened in the sin, and gradually forgets the heinousness of it. Then wilt thou

thou rise without the excuses, which thou now makest to thyself for the omission. Then wilt thou lie down without the remorse, which thou canst not but now feel for the neglect. Thou wilt then lie down and rise with as little concern about it, as the Ox that rises from thy pasture, or as the Horse that lies down in thy stall. Or, if a sudden thought sometimes touches thy heart about it, thou wilt shake it off, and return as serene as before to thy rooted habit of Indevotion. By this means, thou wilt gradually be bringing thy mind and thy spirit to something like the condition of the Devils themselves, into the same inattention towards God, into the same strangeness to him, into the same withdrawing of thyself from any intercourse with him. And so thou wilt gradually be opening a HELL within thee. To be inattentive to God, to become estranged to him, to withdraw thyself from all intercourse with him, is opening a compleat and perfect HELL within thee. And this Hell will then appear so, even to thyself, when

when thou standest at the foot of the Judgment-Seat.

Then shall that God, whom thou hast neglected before, in his turn shew a neglect of thee. Then shall He, to whom thou hast estranged thyself, refuse to know thee at all. And He from whom thou hast withdrawn, will cut thee off from all intercourse with him for ever. Thou shalt then pray: but he will not hear. Thou shalt then beseech him to listen to thy addresses: but he will not hearken. Thou shalt call upon him with every passionate plea of earnestness; thou shalt kneel to him with every moving argument of mercy. But it will be all in vain. Thou choosedst to forget him when he might have been found. And now, in the great hour of his vengeance, he will not suffer thee to come nigh him. In the bitterness and distraction of thy soul, perhaps, thou wilt call upon thy devouter friends, thou wilt call upon thy religious relations, thou wilt call upon the Holy Angels,

Angels, to join their prayers with thine, and to intercede for thee with thy Judge. But they must all acknowledge the justness of thy lot. They must all confess the necessity of thy fate. And they must resign thee up, unassisted and unfriended, to the wailing multitudes on the left. Nothing will then be wanting, but to pronounce the sentence against thee. And that sends thee for ever, with those abandoned Spirits to whom thou hast made thyself so dreadfully like in indevotion, to the regions of lamentation and woe.

From this situation may the spirit of Devotion, cultivated in our breasts, and kept up continually in private prayers, deliver you and me, through the merits of **JESUS CHRIST.**

S E R M O N VIII.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

I HAVE dwelt long upon the awful declarations in this passage of Scripture. And I still dwell upon them, because they are awful. I cannot employ my own thoughts, and I cannot fix your attentions, upon a subject that is so usefully solemn and so formidably important as this, that goes so much to the heart of all Christianity, and that is so likely to influence the whole round of your actions.

When the grand separation has taken place which I described to you in my last,

and the whole assembled multitude of the human race, that is now met together for the first and for the last time, has divided into two bodies, and gone off to the right and left; we may easily suppose the dreadful reflections, which must arise in the breasts of one of the parties. With a countenance of ghastly amazement must those on the left look at the numbers on the right, and see themselves cut off from their society for ever. Brothers torn from Brothers, and Parents from their Children, must feel an addition to their woe from the consideration; if it was possible that any thing could add to the load of affliction, which must now lie heavy at their hearts for their own ruin. But the sense of this will blunt every other feeling. Their own ruin will be uppermost in their thoughts. Their own ruin will be nearest to their hearts. And every other consideration will appear as nothing, in comparison with this.

But, amongst the rest of the wretched, how distinguishedly miserable must be those
Jews

Jews and those Heathens, who were concerned in crucifying the Lord of Life. "Every eye," says St. John, "shall see him, AND THEY ALSO WHICH PIERCED him *." They that condemned him to the cross, they that executed the sentence upon him, Both shall behold him. And oh! with what different countenances will they now behold him! The Roman soldiers, that put the robe and crown of mock-royalty upon him, that struck his venerable face, venerable even under all the disguises of human nature, and that at last presumed to nail him to the tree; they must look up to him with wonderful astonishment. That humble man, whom they treated with all these indignities, is now exalted in their sight, not indeed to the kingdom of the Jews, not indeed to the empire of Rome, not indeed to a seat even among the Angels, but to something infinitely superiour to all. Instead of a robe of ragged scarlet and a platted crown of thorns, He now wears all the ensigns of the Royalty of Heaven. And that face,

* Rev. i. 7.

which

which was buffeted by their vile hands, is now seen by them darting the lightening in its looks, and armed with all the power of the thunder in its lips.

But, if such will be the astonishment of the common soldiers, the mere executioners of the commands of Pilate; how very great must be that of Pilate himself! He knew not indeed any more than the soldiers, That the man who stood arraigned before him was “ a God come down upon earth
“ in the likeness of man.” But he must have known him to be a great and mighty Prophet, a holy and awful Personage, whose doctrine, life, and miracles bespoke the Godhead within. And he actually “ knew, that for envy the Jews had delivered him unto him.” Yet, with all these reasons for exerting his authority to deliver such a person from such persecutors, he meanly shrunk back from his duty; he meanly bartered away his conscience for his interest; and for fear he should be reported as “ no friend to Cæsar,” and so lose all his interest at Court, he “ consent-
K “ ed

“ed that it should be as they desired.”
—And all these things must now present themselves to his memory, with a liveliness and a freshness, as if the facts had been done only the day before. Every circumstance of his scandalous conduct will now rise strongly upon his mind. He will be as much present to the whole scene in fancy, as he was once in reality. And he will now see the faintness of his efforts to save him, the declaration of his innocence, and his disclaiming all share in the shedding of that blood which he himself delivered to be shed, as only serving to prove the consciousness of his guilt, and so to heighten the degree of his punishment. With confusion upon confusion, will he now look up to Him as his Judge, who formerly was judged by him; and stand trembling as a prisoner without hope before Him, who once stood as a prisoner, but in all the composed Majesty of Worth, before him. He will be sure indeed to be treated with that equity now, which he refused then. And he will receive that justice, which he did not shew. But then this equity, this
justice

justice will only serve to increase his punishment. And he will probably turn away with horror from the face of his Prisoner-Judge.

Close by him, we may suppose, and certainly superiour in woe, will stand the Jewish Council, who delivered him bound to Pilate. They knew from their own Prophets, they knew from his miracles, that he was the long-expected Messiah of their nation. They heard the voices of their Prophets "every sabbath-day in their "Synagogues," all proclaiming him to be the Man. They saw the wonderful works, which he wrought in their streets, all pointing him out to be "He that was to "come." And they were particularly convinced of it, by his raising Lazarus from the grave, even four days after his death. Yet, with hearts wholly bent upon the world, with souls that were sunk into the mud of earth, they wanted a Messiah dressed up in all the accoutrements of a Roman General, and leading them on to battles and conquests. And they therefore

refused to receive his offers of salvation. Their depraved inclinations called for a Messiah, that, instead of reclaiming the wildness of our Fallen Nature, should increase it; that, instead of saving us from the consequences of the Fall, should inflame them; and that, instead of raising us to the joys of religion, and the happiness of God himself, should plunge us in blood and slaughter. And, stung to the quick with those powerful convictions of his being the Messiah, which were hourly breaking in upon them; and enraged to the last degree at all their dreams of earthly greatness being entirely overthrown by him; in the madness of impiety, they determined to slay him. They thus resolved to put *him* to death, whom they had seen to be the Author of Miraculous Life to others. And they combined to crush *him*, who confessedly carried the Powers of Omnipotence on his arm.—With infinite force must the sense of this madness now recoil upon their minds, as they see themselves at the foot of *his* Judgment-seat, whom they wickedly presumed to judge before. The

False Witnesses, whom they procured with a murderous intention against him, now stand forth before them, we may suppose, and charge the guilt of their perjury upon *their* heads. One of the Officers also, which “struck him upon the face with “the palm of his hand” in the open court, will now appear in infinite confusion before him, and hold up that hand at the bar for mercy and pardon. And the high-priest Caiaphas, who adjured him by the Living GOD to tell them, whether he was the Christ or no; and who, on his answering that he was, immediately pronounced him a Blasphemer, and sentenced him to death; he will now hear the very words, which our Saviour then used to him, founding (as it were) afresh in his ears, and, with infinite agony at the remembrance of the Prophecy, will see it circumstantially fulfilled. He will “see the Son of Man,” whom he once beheld so humble and so silent, now “sitting at the right hand of Power,” and “come in the clouds of Heaven,” to pronounce the fate of all mankind.

But over-powered as all these must be with the consciousness of their crimes in the presence of their Judge, there will be others, who will be still more overpowered with the same consciousness. Those were Heathens. Those were Jews. But whom I now mean are Christians; Christians, who, dishonouring the name, have either in the pride of their understandings "denied the Lord who bought them" as their Lord and their God, or, in the perverseness of their hearts, have acknowledged him, and yet lived as if they did not. And their fate in these moments of Judgment will be worse, than that of the Jewish or the Heathen murderers of our Saviour.

The world at large presents many instances of this horrid pride of understanding, which refuses to admit any thing into its Creed, but what it can comprehend. This is one of the highest acts of folly, of which the fallen mind of man is capable. It is to confine the actions and the nature of God, within the narrow bounds of our conceptions. And it is therefore what one
would

would think a Being, with only a single spark of reason, could never be guilty of. Yet, in the wildness and wanderings of pretended wisdom, this astonishing folly is but too common. For it is found chiefly among those, who have some pretensions to the character of superiour penetration and knowledge, and who thus pervert the gifts of Heaven to their own destruction. And it particularly vents itself in denying the Godhead of our Saviour.—But how will such a man as this look, when he stands on the left hand of the throne of Christ? He has argued himself into a disbelief, that our Saviour was God as well as Man: and with what amazement will he see him appear in all the glory of the Godhead? He hath set his face against the thousand passages of Scripture, that expressly declare him to be God; and these passages will now rise in dreadful conviction to his mind, and point at the scene of Judgment before him for their confirmation. He will now to his distraction see the force of Infinite Wisdom exerted by his Redeemer-Judge, in laying open and ex-

posing the strange presumptuousness of his spirit. And he will now to his despair feel the power of Infinite Justice employed, to punish it through all Eternity.

Yet even this kind of sinners will be surpassed in terrour and in sufferings by those, who acknowledging the Godhead of Christ, and owning every part of his Gospel, still live on as if they neither owned nor acknowledged any thing. Such men carry the name of Christ (as it were) written upon their foreheads, and yet continue to act as if they were never related to him. They profess themselves Christians; and are so, as far as concerns belief. But in heart, in practice, they are merely Heathens. With Christ's commands to holiness before them, they wallow perhaps in unholiness. Under a full conviction, that drunkenness now must be atoned for by an everlasting fast hereafter, they are frequently, perhaps they are habitually, drunk. And thus, with the Gospel-directions for Heaven in their hands, they take the straight road to Hell.—Many, God knows,

knows, many are the persons who act in this dreadfully contradictory manner. Many of them are daily dropping into the grave. And many of them are daily hastening thither. But how shall such a man appear, in this tremendous moment of separation at the throne of Judgment? That Lord, to whom he acknowledged obedience due, but to whom he never paid it, now sits in majesty before him, mounted on the seat of Justice, and raising the right arm of his vengeance to punish him. The stupidity, the idiotcy of his own conduct is then seen by him in the fullest light. He had stupidly put off what he could not but design. He had idiot-like deferred what he knew to be necessary. And he was overtaken in his folly by the day of death. He therefore shrinks back from the upbraiding eye of his Judge. He dreads to be reminded by it, of all which the Gospel of that Judge had done for his salvation, of all the gracious promises which it once made him, and of all the horrible threatenings which it once pronounced

nounced to him. He finds those threatenings now beginning to be executed, in the offended looks of his Saviour. He would give worlds, if he had them, to shelter himself from the view. He would eagerly flee away, if he could, and "hide himself in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains." He calls to the hills to screen him, he cries to the mountains to cover him, from the terrour of a countenance, that was once the seat of mildness and graciousness and love to him, but that now appears worse than ten thousand furies to his despairing soul. "He says to the Mountains and Rocks, Fall on me, and hide me from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand *?"

Where indeed shall the Sinner be able to stand at this hour of vengeance? Where shall the Ungodly fly for shelter? No,

* Rev. vi. 15-17.

dens, no rocks of the mountains, are at hand to cover him. The throne, the throngs, the Judgment, all are above the tops of the highest hills. And, if they were not, no dens, no rocks, no mountains could cover him from the eye and hand of his Judge. That eye would dart down through the depths of a thousand mountains, and flash shame and confusion upon the face of the ungodly. And that hand could reach even beyond the bounds of the ocean, and arrest the lurking sinner there. Indeed worlds heaped upon worlds would neither stop the eye, nor check the hand, of the Saviour-GOD.—He must stand forward, therefore, among the other companions of his fate, and be forced to hear the sentence pronounced against him. And then he is dismissed, with a heavy addition of terrour upon his spirits, to the great and grand dungeon of GOD, the everlasting prison-house of the whole creation; there to continue, there to suffer, and there to lament, throughout the circle of Eternity.

Now

140 S E R M O N V I I I .

Now to GOD the Father, GOD the Son,
and GOD the Holy Ghost, be our earnest
prayers addressed, that we may all escape
these terrours and these sufferings, through
the merits of Jesus Christ !

S E R .

S E R M O N IX.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

WHEN now that grand separation has been made between the Good and the Bad, which could never be made in life; and the two great divisions now stand on the right and on the left of the Judgment-Seat of Christ; then is to follow the mighty closure of the whole. The sentence is then to be past upon Both. And Both are to be consigned to that place of residence, for which they have been qualifying their minds and attempering their dispositions on earth.

Of this wonderful part of the solemnity, our Saviour has given us the following account.

count.—“When the Son of Man,”
says He, “shall come in his glory, and all
“the Holy Angels with him; then shall
“he sit upon the throne of his glory.
“And before him shall be gathered all na-
“tions; and he shall separate them one
“from another, as a shepherd divideth his
“sheep from the goats. And he shall set
“the sheep on his right hand, but the
“goats on the left. Then shall the King
“say unto them on his right hand, Come,
“ye blessed children of my Father, inherit
“the kingdom prepared for you from the
“foundation of the world. For I was an
“hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was
“thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was
“a stranger, and ye took me in; naked
“and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye
“visited me; I was in prison, and ye
“came unto me. Then shall the Right-
“eous answer him, saying, Lord, when
“saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee;
“or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When
“saw we thee a stranger, and took thee
“in; or naked, and clothed thee? or
“when saw we thee sick or in prison, and
“came

“ came unto thee ? And the King shall
“ answer and say unto them, Verily I say
“ unto you, In as much as ye have done
“ it unto one of the least of these my Bre-
“ thren, ye have done it unto me. Then
“ shall he say also unto them on the left
“ hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into
“ Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil
“ and his Angels. For I was an hungred,
“ and ye gave me no meat ; I was thirsty,
“ and ye gave me no drink ; I was a
“ stranger, and ye took me not in ; naked,
“ and ye clothed me not ; sick and in
“ prison, and ye visited me not. Then
“ shall they also answer him, saying, Lord,
“ when saw we thee an hungred, or a
“ thirst, or a stranger, or sick, or in pri-
“ son, and did not minister unto thee ?
“ Then shall he answer them, saying,
“ Verily I say unto you, In as much as
“ ye did it not to one of the least of these,
“ ye did it not to me. And these shall go
“ away into Everlasting Punishment, but
“ the Righteous into Life Eternal *.”

* Mat. xxv. 31—46.

This account is given us, we must remember, by HIM who is to act the very part here attributed to the Son of Man. He is that Son of Man himself, and here speaks of what he himself is to perform. And he shews us, that our charity to one another, our attention to the worldly wants, and our relief of the bodily necessities, of our Poor Brethren in this our state of trial and of trouble, will be greatly insisted upon by him at the hour of Judgment. Wretched as we are made even in this world by the Fall, by the introduction of sin into the world, and by the coming of misery along with it, Misery, that sure and certain attendant upon Sin; God has compassionately united our duty to Him with our charity to one another. He has fixed our acceptance at his Judgment-seat, upon the ground of our being kind to our brethren. And he has declared the one to be absolutely necessary to the other.

But then this is all, we must remember. Charity, however great and glorious, will
not

not be sufficient of itself at that day of rigorous account. It will not make up for one indulged sin. It will not atone for one unrepented wickedness.—In the prevailing spirit of charity, that so strongly and so honourably marks the present times, this spirit has been rated too highly. And our Saviour's account of the Day of Judgment has been appealed to, to confirm the fancy. But his account means only this, That if other graces of the Christian Life are not wanting, our charitableness will greatly recommend us to the favour of our Judge. All other virtues will also be taken into consideration, though this will be esteemed as one of the principal. "With-
"out holiness" particularly, as we are expressly told, "no man shall see the
"Lord." And even, as we are also told, "by our words we shall be justified, and
"by our words we shall be condemned."
The whole circle of Christian dispositions, the whole round of Christian practices, will be taken into the view of our Judge. And all our actions, all our words, and all our thoughts will be weighed in the ba-

lance together, at that moment of unerring decision for Eternity.

When all these have been fairly scanned from the Books of God, and the whole goodness or the whole badness of every son and daughter of Adam now stands forth in full display before the eye of the Judge; he will then proceed to pronounce the sentence, and assign them their several degrees of reward or punishment. And let us picture to ourselves this grand act, the masterpiece of the whole. Let us suppose, that we now at this instant behold the awful Judge, arrayed in the manner in which I have formerly described him to you from the book of Daniel; with “a garment
“white as snow, and the hair of his head
“like pure wool; his throne like the fiery
“flame, and its wheels as burning fire; a
“fiery stream issuing and coming forth before him.” Let us suppose, that we see him at this instant rising up to pronounce the sentence, with the appearance of the manhood and the majesty of the GODHEAD united together. Pleasure, indignation, and
pity

pity will then probably mingle on his face. He will appear rejoicing with satisfaction over the thousands and ten thousands of the Religious, who will be standing on his right hand, and to whom he is going to declare the approbation of God, and to deliver the happiness of Heaven. He will appear calmly angry at the thousands and ten thousands of the Wicked, who will be ranged on his left, on whom he is now to pronounce the Curse of God, and to whom he is to assign the miseries of Hell. And he will yet look, we may suppose, with an eye of tenderness and pity on them.

With these different passions softly blending on his face, he now begins to rise from the seat of Judgment. Every eye, among the millions on either side of him, will be steadfastly fixed upon him, ready almost to start from their sockets, and eagerly marking his important movements. The fate of the world depends upon them. The everlasting destiny of the whole race of man is to be determined by them. And

every heart will beat with a transport or a fear, vastly beyond all that they have ever felt of fear or of transport before. Awe keeps the Good Angels in a solemn suspense of attention. And horror freezes up the spirits of the Devils, we must suppose, into a kind of half-insensibility to the act.

He is now risen. He stands upon the upper step of the Judgment-Seat. He addresses himself to the two divisions of Good and Bad. He first speaks to those on his right. And, as he speaks, they lean forward (we may suppose) with astonishing eagerness to catch the musick of his words. "Come," he cries with a smile that shews a kind of Heaven opening in his countenance, "Come, ye Blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Come, ye who in the midst of a thousand temptations from a Fallen World, and under many and great failings from your Fallen Natures, have yet approved yourselves upon the whole to be the servants of Religion,

Religion, the disciples of your Redeemer, and the friends of your God; and who have been now approved of for it by your God and your Redeemer, and placed at the right hand of the throne; come with me, and enter with me into the everlasting mansions of glory from which I am just now come. I was once in the flesh, like you. This human form, which ye now see, reminds you that I was once exposed to all the weaknesses and failings of your Fallen Nature. I can therefore make every allowance for your failings. My sufferings atone for them. And ye now stand before me, as acquitted of every guilt, as absolved from every offence, and as the dear and favourite children of your Heavenly Father. Come then with me; and I will now ascend with you to "your Father and my Father, and to your God and my God."

With what inexpressible, with what inconceivable joy, must such words as these from the lips of their Judge fall upon the ears, and sink into the hearts, of the elated

crowds! Any joy, that they ever felt on earth, must be infinitely inferiour to it. It must touch the strings of their hearts with a force, even superiour to what they knew just before. And it must run in one wild kindling of rapture throughout their whole frame. They are all now happy; happy in the approbation of their God; happy in the blessing of their Judge; happy in their great and grand determination for Eternity. And the separation of their souls after death, the separation of their persons at the throne of Judgment, have now had their full effect, in the glorious invitation of their Lord to accompany him on his return to Heaven, and to be with him there for ever and for ever.

A pause perhaps will then ensue; a pause of deadly horror to the Wicked on his left. And how must the secret awe thrill through their very souls, in this moment of dreadful suspense. But it is now over. They see the GOD-MAN beginning to turn towards them. They behold his face fixed upon them. And they observe him just opening

opening his lips to condemn them. In fearful fancy they already hear the words issuing from him, they already have them tingling on their ears, they already feel them going cold to their hearts.

He perhaps stretches forth his averted hand towards them. And then he cries, "Depart from me, Ye cursed, into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels." Be gone from my presence, all ye who were created by me in order to be religious; but who would not take my word, that the only happiness of man lay in a religious attachment to God, in becoming more and more like to him in Goodness, and so approaching nearer and nearer to him in Bliss. Ye have wildly presumed to cut out a happiness for yourselves, to become independent of God, and to be the makers and framers of your own fortunes. Be gone therefore. That God, whom ye have rejected, is now estranged to you. That Friend of Angels and of Men, whom ye never courted,

whom ye neglected, whom ye even dared perhaps to despise in your heart, can now be no friend to you. And that bleeding and dying Saviour, who called, who intreated, who adjured you to be saved, to walk in the line which he had marked out to you, and so to secure to yourselves the peace of obedience here and the bliss of obedience hereafter; He, even he, is now your Judge, and forced to condemn you. Be gone then, to receive that curse which your wilfulness and wickedness have brought upon you. Be gone to that horrible gulph of fire, which the vengeance of God scooped out at the rebellion of the Angels, and which is now to contain both you and them; Spirits equally rebellious, equally offensive to God, and equally unfitted for any other habitation. Be gone. The presence of God, the society of Angels, and the company of the Good, would be stained and sullied by your continuance among them. Heaven cannot take you in. Hell only can. And to that place of punishment I now banish you for ever.

At

At the close of this sentence, we may suppose, one deep and general groan of horror will burst instinctively from the whole multitude. And all the terrours of that abode of Spirits, in which their souls were kept after death; all the terrours of the Last Trump, of their Resurrection, and of their appearance before the Throne; even all the terrours of their grand separation to the left of it; all, all will now appear but little, in comparison with what they feel at present. All Hell opens upon them in the sentence. And all the horrors of an Eternity there break in upon their sinking souls,

The Deed of Deeds is done. The solemnity of man's Judgment is over. And nothing remains to complete the whole, but to sentence those abandoned Spirits, who first enticed man into rebellion, and have since continued so many thousands in it. The over-powering hand of their God is upon them. They stand before the Throne. The two bodies of man-kind,

kind, the condemned numbers on the left, the applauded numbers on the right, are Both silent witnesses against them. Some of the Good are even made to act as Judges upon them. "SHALL NOT WE JUDGE ANGELS?" says St. Paul. They are condemned. They are condemned by those very Beings, whom they once endeavoured to draw into their disobedience, and who are now going to be exalted into their room. And, if any thing could add to the wretchedness of these proud and revengeful Spirits, it must be, That they shall not only be sentenced with their ungodly followers to Hell, but that, while man is sent thither by God, they shall be sent by man himself. The first of this rebel host, the first in shame, in confusion, in punishment, will be that horrid Archangel, whom we peculiarly call THE DEVIL; the foremost Son of Sin in the whole creation, the Beginner of Sedition in the works of God, and the Author of Rebellion even in Heaven. He will then be brought forth at the head of them. And he will then be sentenced with them, but to a doom heavier than

than that of the rest, to a punishment more severe, and to sufferings more exemplary.

This done, the Wicked will instantly depart to their place of torments. The Judge will begin to re-ascend towards Heaven. All the Angels, all the Good, will attend him triumphantly on his way. The throne of Judgment will disappear. The world will be given up to destruction. And God's grand magazine of fire will burst forth at once, and lay waste the whole creation from end to end,

The world, we must suppose, is now no more. Man is no longer in being, as an inhabitant of earth. And how little must now appear all the things, which once distracted our attention and perplexed our hearts! What were the troubles of life, which often sat so heavy on our spirits, and were so disquieting to our thoughts? They now appear merely as the storms of a winter's day, forgotten almost as soon as they were past, and pre-
paring

paring us the better for that Everlasting Spring, which is beginning to open upon the Good. And what were all the self-denials of religion, which often felt so grating to our bodily senses, and were frequently so harsh to our corrupted passions? They now appear only as the necessary restraints of childhood, necessary to be commanded by the parent while the child was in the ignorance of infancy, and necessary to keep it (as it were) from offering to play with the fire, or from venturing to feed upon poison. All now appears as it really was. Nothing is now valuable in the thoughts of the triumphing Good, but what ministered to religion. Nothing is now dreadful in the reflections of the lamenting Bad, but what has led them to the ruin into which they are fallen.

Think of this, all of you. Ye will all stand at the Judgment-seat of Christ. Ye will all take your places on the right or on the left of it. And ye will all either hear with horror, or listen to with rapture, the deciding voice of your Judge. O may
ye

ye all listen to it with rapture ! May it
found like the Harmony of Heaven in your
ears ! And may it go with the Delicousness
of Heaven to your hearts !

May this be the happy case with every
one amongst you, through the merits of
Jesus Christ, your Redeemer and your
Judge.

we all listen to it with rapturous delight
and like the fragrance of Heaven in your
heart and may it go with the blessed
of Heaven to your hearts!

S E R M O N X.

one amongst you, through the merits of
 Jesus Christ your Lord and Saviour.
HEBREWS IX. 27.

*It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after
 this the Judgment.*

MY discourses upon this subject now
 draw near to a conclusion. I have
 nearly wound up the long thread of my
 exhortations and instructions from it. And
 I have only to describe to you the awfully
 pleasing happiness of Heaven, and the aw-
 fully terrible miseries of Hell. These in-
 deed are points, which it will be difficult
 to lay before you in any degree of lively
 forcibleness, equal to their important na-
 ture. But I shall endeavour to do it; and
 try to bring them strikingly present to your
 thoughts, and to make them act powerfully
 upon your spirits. The general notions of
 Heaven

Heaven and of Hell are often so confused and indistinct in themselves, that they have not half the weight which they would otherwise have upon the heart. It shall be my aim to clear up this confusion, and to unfold this indistinctness, to you. And I hope that, at the close of what I have to say to you upon the solemn point, ye will have as clear and as just notions of the nature of your future allotment in the regions beyond the grave, as the difference between those scenes and the scenes of this world will permit.

When the grand solemnity of Judgment is now closed, and the Good and the Bad have had their places of abode everlastingly assigned to them; then is to come the great and mighty conclusion of the whole, the Execution of the Sentence of God. Then are all the Good, then are all the Bad, to be sent immediately to their several places. And Heaven and Hell are to receive their new colony of inhabitants. A train of the religious Angels of God will

be ordered to drive their fallen and revolted brethren of Heaven, and the condemned sons and daughters of Adam, to their allotted mansions of misery. "The Son of Man," we are told by our Saviour himself, "shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire *." "At the end of the world," says our Saviour in another place, "the Angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire †" Armed with all the power of GOD, they shall drive these wretched children of despair before them. And they shall cast them into that Furnace of Fire, which was prepared for the Devil and his Angels before the foundation of the world.

In the mean time, the rest of the Angels of GOD shall ascend with their Lord and Master, and with their new companions of

* Mat. xiii. 42.

† xiii. 49—50.

earth, to that awful place which is (as it were) the peculiar Abode of God. This lies far above those Heavens, which form a kind of canopy over our heads, and appear so beautiful to our eyes. It lies far beyond the place of the sun and moon, far beyond all the stars. And it is the great and glorious Palace (as it were) of the Dread Sovereign of the Universe. There he discloses himself in such wonderful brightness to the sight of his creatures, that the Angels themselves are represented in Scripture, as unable to bear the blaze of it, and as covering their dazzled eyes with their wings*. And thus he is (as it were) the SUN of that Higher World, and the cause of infinite satisfaction and gladness to the hearts of the Angels.

God indeed, we must remember, is every where present to his creatures. He is as present to us now in this world, as he will be to us in the next. And he will then be as present to the Devils and Condemned Souls in Hell, as to Angels and Good

* *Isaiah vi. 2.*

Men in Heaven. But his presence here is secret to us, known only by our reason, and unperceived by our senses. His presence there will be plain and striking, as plain as the sun in a cloudless day, and as striking in its influences on our spirits. His presence to the Condemned in Hell will only add to their torments, and they will shrink into their flames (as it were) to hide themselves from him. But his presence in Heaven will be an inexhaustible and overflowing Fountain of Bliss to the souls that are admitted to the sight of it, will be ever acting as an Enlivening Principle on their spirits, and will be ever going in a tide of transport to their hearts.

To this place, then, will the mighty Judge of Heaven and Earth now carry all the faithful children of God. He will probably go before them, as the "Captain of their Salvation," to introduce them to their new abode. They will probably follow immediately behind. And the Angels will naturally close the rear. The glorious procession goes on, making towards

wards the kingdom of Heaven, and leaving the Earth, the Air, and the Skies all in one flame below. And GOD the Father must look down delighted from his throne, to see so many of his Fallen Creatures now for ever recovered from the Fall, and now added for ever to the number of his Holy Angels.

The train arrives at the gates of Heaven. And the gates fly open to receive them. The whole work of their Saviour-GOD is now concluded in glory. His coming down upon earth as a Man, his instructions, his exhortations, his life, and his death, have now had their decisive and happy effect, in the rescue of millions from the jaws of ruin. Those millions are now come with their Divine Deliverer, to enjoy the blessings promised to them, and to be happy with him for ever and ever. They enter in to this place of wonders and of bliss. And he leads them, we may suppose, immediately to the throne of "his Father and their Father, and of his God and their God."

This throne is thus magnificently described in the Book of Revelations. “ Be-
 “ hold, a throne was set in Heaven, and
 “ One sat on the throne. And He that
 “ sat was to look upon like a Jasper and a
 “ Sardine Stone. And there was a rain-
 “ bow round about the throne, in sight
 “ like unto an Emerald. And round
 “ about the throne were four and twenty
 “ seats, and upon the seats I saw four and
 “ twenty Elders sitting, clothed in white
 “ raiment; and they had on their heads
 “ crowns of gold. And out of the throne
 “ proceeded lightnings and thunderings
 “ and voices; and there were seven Lamps
 “ of Fire burning before the throne, which
 “ are the Seven Spirits of God. And
 “ before the throne there was a Sea of
 “ Glass like unto chrystal; and in the
 “ midst of the throne, and round about the
 “ throne, were four Beasts * full of eyes
 “ before and behind. — And the four Beasts
 “ had each of them six wings about him,

* *Living Creatures*, *Zeas*. “ One had a face as a man,”
 v. 7. And they are all the well-known emblems of the
 four Evangelists, derived by tradition from this Scripture.

“ and

“ and they were full of eyes within. And
“ they rest not day and night, saying,
“ Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,
“ which was, and is, and is to come.
“ And, when these Beasts give glory and
“ honour and thanks to him that sat on
“ the throne, who liveth for ever and ever;
“ the four and twenty elders fall down be-
“ fore him that sat on the throne, saying,
“ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive
“ Glory and Honour and Power, for thou
“ hast created All Things, and for thy
“ pleasure they are, and were created *.”

Such is the appearance of God on the throne of Heaven. And such is the manner, in which the Holy Angels are day and night employed before it! At this awful Center (as it were) of Heaven, at this Holy of Holies above, at this glorious Shrine of the ever-adorable Godhead, will our Judge and Saviour probably present his redeemed servants, immediately on his carrying them into Heaven. There they will receive the approbation of their God

* iv. 2—11.

and the applause of their Creator. That approbation will instantly begin an Excess of Bliss to their Souls. And that applause will instantly seal an Eternity of Bliss to their Beings.

Then will follow probably those rapturous scenes of triumph, which are so frequently and so livelily painted in the Book of Revelations, and which are so very animating to every pious Spirit. "I beheld," says St. John, "and lo! a great multitude, " which no man could number, of all nations, " and kindreds, and people, and tongues, " stood before the Throne and before the " Lamb, clothed with white robes, and " with Palms in their hands; and cried " with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to " our God which sitteth upon the Throne, " and unto the Lamb. And all the An- " gels stood round about the Throne, and " about the Elders and the Four Beasts, " and fell before the Throne on their faces, " and worshipped God, saying, Amen, " Blessing and Glory and Wisdom and " Thanksgiving and Honour and Power " and

“and Might be unto our GOD for ever
“and ever, Amen*.” “I heard,” says
St. John in another place, “I heard a
“loud voice saying in Heaven, Now is
“come Salvation and Strength, and the
“Kingdom of our GOD, and the Power
“of his Christ; for the Accuser of our
“Brethren is cast down, which accused
“them before our GOD day and night.
“And they overcame him by the blood of
“the Lamb and by the word of their tes-
“timony.—Therefore rejoice, ye Hea-
“vens, and ye that dwell in them†.”
“And there were great voices in Heaven,
“saying, The kingdoms of the world are
“become the kingdoms of our Lord and
“of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever
“and ever. And the Four and Twenty
“Elders, which sat before GOD on their
“seats, fell upon their faces, and wor-
“shipped GOD, saying, We give thee
“thanks, O Lord GOD Almighty, which
“art, and wast, and art to come, be-
“cause thou hast taken to thee thy great

* Rev. vii. 9—12.

† xii. 10—11.

“ power, and hast reigned ; and—thy
 “ wrath” hath “ come, and the time of
 “ the Dead that they should be judged,
 “ and that thou shouldest give reward unto
 “ thy servants the Prophets, and to the
 “ Saints, and them that fear thy name,
 “ small and great *.” “ And they sung
 “ a new song, saying, Thou art worthy
 “ — ; for thou wast slain, and hast re-
 “ deemed us to GOD by thy blood out of
 “ every kindred and tongue and people
 “ and nation ; and hast made us unto our
 “ GOD Kings and Priests ; and we shall
 “ reign” for ever. “ And I beheld, and
 “ I heard the voice of many Angels round
 “ about the Throne and the Beasts and the
 “ Elders ; and the number of them was
 “ ten thousand times ten thousand, and
 “ thousands of thousands ; saying with a
 “ loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that
 “ was slain to receive Power, and Riches,
 “ and Wisdom, and Strength, and Ho-
 “ nour, and Glory, and Blessing. And
 “ every creature which is in Heaven—

* Rev. xi. 15—18.

“ heard

“ heard I saying, Blessing, and Honour,
“ and Glory, and Power be unto him that
“ sitteth on the Throne, and unto the
“ Lamb, for ever and ever *.”

In this burst of exultation and transport, how must the hearts of the Good all leap within them. Heaven breaks in upon their admiring souls in an overwhelming flood of rapture. And they feel their spirits rejoicing within them “ with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”—They then receive, we may suppose, their several and allotted habitations. “ In my Father’s House,” says our Saviour, “ are many mansions.” And from them they will go forth in their courses, it seems, to offer up their prayers of thanksgiving, respect, and affection at the foot of the Throne of God. “ They are,” says the Book of Revelations concerning the souls of Good Men made perfect, “ They are before the Throne of God, and serve him day and

* Rev. v. 9—13.

“ night

“night in his temple *.” They unite with the Angels, no doubt, in taking their turns of devout attendance, at this the Peculiar, the Angelick Temple of God; and feel their refined spirits kindling into higher and higher degrees of happiness, as they awfully tremble and adore there. And these acts of devotion shed a strong lustre of joy, probably, over all the rest of their time. They wind up their spirits to the highest pitch of transport, that even Heaven is capable of giving. And their frequent returns to the Throne become at once an exercise of duty to their God, and an instrument of happiness to themselves; again renewing the slackened spring of their spirits, and winding them up again to their former extasies.

Thus employed, and thus actuated, they find themselves happy beyond all that their warmest imaginations had before held out to them. “Eye hath not seen,” says the

* Rev. vii. 15.

Scripture, "nor ear heard, neither hath
"it entered into the heart of man to
"conceive, the things that GOD hath
"prepared for them that love him."
And, as we are more particularly told in
other Scriptures, "GOD shall wipe away
"all tears from their eyes —; they shall
"hunger no more, neither thirst any
"more; neither shall the Sun light on
"them, nor any heat.—There shall be no
"more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Cry-
"ing; neither shall there be any more
"Pain; for the former things are passed
"away *" "I heard," says St. John,
"a great voice from Heaven, saying, Be-
"hold, the Tabernacle of GOD is with
"men, and he will dwell with them, and
"they shall be his People; and GOD him-
"self shall be with them, and be their
"GOD †." "He that sitteth on the
"Throne shall dwell among them—.
"The Lamb," also, "which is in the
"midst of the Throne, shall feed them,
"and shall lead them unto living fountains

* Rev. xxi. 4, and vii. 16.

† xxi. 3.

“ of waters *.” And this Everlasting City of GOD, as we are also told, shall have “ no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon, to shine in it; for the GLORY OF THE LORD shall lighten it, and the Lamb shall be the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it †.”

Such then is that Heaven, which is held forth to your faith here, and assured to your enjoyment hereafter! And is not this a prize worthy all your aims, all your efforts to obtain? Is it not a recompence vastly superiour to all the trials and troubles of a religious life? Is it not a reward infinitely great and high, for all the little services of religion we can perform on earth? Yes, certainly it is all this. And shall not Ye and I, then, determine by the Grace of GOD to seize this glorious stake before us, and to secure this bright inheritance in

* Rev. vii. 15—16.

† xxi. 23—24.

Heaven?

Heaven? What, what shall keep us, my Brethren, from doing so? Shall the poor temptations of a world, that can afford us no substantial comfort here, and would rob us of every joy hereafter? Shall the mean allurements of our senses, those low and insignificant appendages of our nature? Or shall the seducing arts of that wicked Archangel, who is for ever ruined himself, and tempts only to involve us in his ruin? Surely they shall not. They shall not, if we have one grain of regard for our own interest, if we have one principle of understanding that is able to distinguish it, if we have one spark of spirit that is capable of pursuing it. Nothing less than Heaven should be the exchange for Heaven. Nothing less than an interest as sure, as substantial, as lasting, should be accepted in lieu of it. And all that Earth can give, all that Sense can afford, all that even the Fallen Angels can make us hope for, will be no more in the balance with what God hath prepared for us, than mere toys and trifles, the beads, the gewgaws, and the trinkets

trinkets of an Ideot, accepted in purchase for Gold and Diamonds.

That this awful truth may go to your hearts and to mine, I pray in the name and through the merits of Jesus Chriff our Lord.

S E R

S E R M O N XI.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after
this the Judgment.*

I AM now come to the conclusion of all my discourses to you from this passage of Scripture. And they must conclude in a frightful picture of horror. The miseries of Hell now lie before me. These I am to describe to you as clearly and as circumstantially as I can. And a very unpleasing task it is. The joys, the glories of Heaven the mind rests upon with pleasure. But from the terrors of Hell what Spirit is there that does not turn back with dismay? Yet the subject must be gone through. It is a necessary part of my whole scheme. And the very terribleness of it will make it more significantly useful. This will carry

it with greater force to the heart. This will leave it in a stronger impression there. And this will cause it to go, with a more lively and a more lasting influence, through the whole habit of your lives.

When the fearful solemnity of the Last Judgment is over with the Wicked, and they are condemned with their tempters, the Devils, to their everlasting residence in Hell; the Angels will then put the dreadful sentence in execution. The wretched numbers of the Damned will be driven like a flock of sheep before them, having the terms of their condemnation still sounding in their ears, having the presence of their Condemner still appearing before their eyes, and shuddering with consternation in every limb. They still hear his awful words, though no longer pronounced by him. They still see his upbraiding looks, though he is now gone with his faithful children to Heaven. And they find themselves driven hastily to their place of condemnation, by the out-stretched arm

of their Judge, and by a band of his Holy Angels.

How powerfully the terrible appearance of the Judge must work upon their funkensouls, we may conclude from the two descriptions, which I have already given of that appearance out of the Scriptures themselves. And I shall now add another from the same writings, that may bring the whole scene more freshly before your minds. "I saw," says St. John, "One like unto the Son of Man, clothed with
" a garment down to the foot, and girt
" about the paps with a golden girdle.
" His head and his hairs were white like
" wool, as white as snow; and his eyes
" were as a flame of fire, and his feet like
" unto fine brass, as if they burned in a
" furnace; and his voice as the sound of
" many waters. And out of his mouth
" went a sharp two-edged sword, and his
" countenance was as the sun shineth in
" his strength. And, when I saw him, I
" fell at his feet as dead *." How

* Rev. i. 13—18.

Strongly must most of these circumstances dwell upon the haunted souls of the Damned, as they are driven from the throne of condemnation to the place of execution. They must still see his "Eyes" bent "as a flame of fire" upon them. They must still hear his "Voice as the sound of many waters" in their ears. They must still behold "a sharp two-edged sword" proceeding "out of his Mouth," in the dreadful sentence pronounced upon them. And his countenance must be still beaming before them, "as the sun shining out in his strength."

Their condemner thus seems to go along with them, though absent, and to attend them to their dreadful abode in the Deep. This lies somewhere on the outside of the Creation, and below the deepest foundations of the earth; as much indeed below the earth in all probability, as the Heaven of Heavens is above it. Thus our Saviour calls it repeatedly "the place of Outer Darknes *," and St. Peter

* Mat. viii. 12.

says that God cast his revolted Angels
“down to Hell *.” Thus a fire, we are
told in Deuteronomy, “shall burn to the
“lowest Hell †.” And the secrets of
God’s Providence, says the Book of Job,
“are as high as Heaven, and deeper than
“Hell ‡.” To this place, then, they are
driven. They reach it. They see the
gates, we may suppose, instantly fly open
to admit them. And all the nature of this
horrible dungeon bursts out at once upon
their senses. St. John saw the same scene
in a vision, and thus describes it. “An
“Angel—opened the Bottomless Pit, and
“there arose a smoke out of the Pit, AS
“THE SMOKE OF A GREAT FURNACE; and
“THE SUN AND THE AIR WERE DARK-
“ENED BY REASON OF THE SMOKE OF
“THE PIT §.” The whole disclosed
gulph appears merely as a mighty furnace,
and sends forth a thick cloud of fire and
smoke. And well may they all, therefore,
turn back instantly with dread and dismay

* ii. xi. 4.

† xi. 8.

‡ xxxii. 22.

§ Rev. ix. 2.

at the heart-chilling sight. But the stronger
terrors of their Judge are upon them.
The Angels also push them on. And
however weeping, however struggling,
however shrieking, they are driven into
the mouth of the Flaming Furnace, and
lodged in the depths of the Nethermost
Hell.

“ I saw,” says St. John, “ an Angel
“ come down from Heaven, having the
“ Key of the Bottomless Pit, and a great
“ chain, in his hand. And he laid hold
“ of the Dragon, that Old Serpent, which
“ is the Devil and Satan, and bound
“ him——, and cast him into the Bot-
“ tomless Pit, and shut him up, and set a
“ seal upon him, that he should deceive
“ the nations no more.—— And the De-
“ vil that deceived them was cast into the
“ lake of fire and brimstone.—— And
“ whosoever was not found written in the
“ Book of Life was” also “ cast into the
“ lake of fire *.”

* Rev. xx. 1, 3, 10 and 15.

This Angel we may suppose to be the leader of that Angelick Band, which were commissioned to execute the sentence of the Judge, and to carry the condemned prisoners to their Dungeon of Darkness. They have now discharged their commission. They have put these sons and daughters of perdition in their place of torments. And the leading Angel will now close the gates upon them. As these turn upon their hinges to shut them in, what a sullen sound of horror must run through all their souls! The gates turn. The gates shut. And then the Archangel applies his massy key to the lock. It goes through all its wards. It drives fast all its bolts. And the depths of Hell must re-eccho to the dismal sound of their shooting.

He then fixes the Seal of God upon the gates. That seal not all the combined Powers of Hell can break. That seal not even all the Angels of Heaven can dissolve. It carries the voice of their Almighty Judge in its power. And it stamps an Eternity

of Continuance upon their misery. This done, we may suppose, he throws away the Key, as never more to be used, as never to unlock the Gates of Hell again. Never, never shall the sound of its turning be heard again there. Never, never shall it again be applied to the lock. Those bolts have been now shot for ever. And they shall be left to rest in their holds, throughout the whole Eternity of God.

The Angels have now done the awful business that was intrusted to them. They therefore return to Heaven, to enjoy scenes very different from these, and to be happy with their Brethren of Heaven, and with their Friends of Earth, in the sight, in the smiles, and in the happiness, of God. Meanwhile the children of misery, whom they have left behind them in Hell, enter upon their everlasting round of wretchedness. And what they feared, what they saw, what they felt before, is greatly exceeded by their present afflictions. They are now in the midst of that vast furnace, which opened upon them in a cloud of fire
and

and smoke. They now lie weltering on that lake of fire and brimstone, which sent it forth upon them. And oh! what words can speak, what pen describe, or what heart conceive, the big, big horrors of their situation?

The Scripture represents them to our imagination in this manner. "Cast Ye," says our Saviour, "the unprofitable servant into Outer Darkness: there SHALL BE WEeping AND GNASHING OF TEETH *." "It is better for thee," says our Saviour in another place, "to enter into life maimed, than, having two hands, to go into Hell, INTO THE FIRE THAT NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED, WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.—It is better for thee to enter halt into life, than, having two feet, to be cast into Hell, INTO THE FIRE THAT NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED, WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.—It is bet-

* Mat. xxv. 30.

“ter for thee to enter into the Kingdom
 “of GOD with one eye, than, having two
 “eyes, to be cast into Hell-fire, WHERE
 “THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THE
 “FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED. FOR EVERY
 “ONE SHALL BE SALTED WITH FIRE.*.”

Their whole prison, then, will appear around them, as they turn their frightened eyes on every side, nothing but one vast lake of flames below, and nothing but one vast cloud of smoke above. A dreadful “blackness of darkness †” reigns in every part, except that it is faintly enlightened by the pale reflection of the flames. And this dismal kind of gleam must serve only to make the darkness more dreadful.— They therefore turn perhaps with ghastly eyes, and look at the companions of their ruin near them. They see them rolling their eyes about, in the same confounding survey of their Prison-house. They see them turning to look at them. And they receive additional terror from one another’s countenances,

* Mark ix. 43—49.

† Jude xiii.

But

But yet what is all this to that which they feel in themselves? They find their bodies now fitted for the first time to resist all the consuming powers of fire, but as much alive as ever to all the painful violences of it. Their bodies are now, as our Saviour declared they should be, "all **"SALTED WITH FIRE;"** all so tempered and prepared, as to burn the more fiercely, and yet never to consume. The flames are perpetually preying upon them, and putting them to the most exquisite tortures. And they must lie for ever smarting and writhing upon the Fiery Lake.

Yet their mind suffers still worse in and from itself. There, there is "A WORM **"THAT NEVER DIETH."** That immortal Spirit in their bosoms, which was designed for Heaven and Happiness, and has been reduced to misery by her own sottishness only, now feels the dreadful reflection in ten thousand stings within. Heaven and Happiness are lost for ever. And Hell and Horreur now infold them on every side. Many a heart-felt thought runs
back

back to the scenes of earth, to the hour of their trial there, and to the title which they then had to the favour of God. But this now serves only to increase their affliction, to shew them the difference of their present situation with what it might have been, and to plunge them still deeper in woe. The hour of trial is past for ever. The favour of God is for ever forfeited. And the glorious light of Heaven is saddened for ever into the darkness and dismalness of Hell. Many a longing look therefore, many a weeping eye, do they throw back towards the Doors of their horrible dungeon. But those doors alas! never more shall be opened to them. They are ruined beyond the reach of redemption. They are wretched, even beyond the possibilities of Hope.

“Tophet,” says Isaiah of this place,
 “Tophet is ordained of old; yea—it is
 “prepared; He hath made it deep and
 “large; the pile thereof is Fire and much
 “Wood; the Breath of the Lord, like
 “a stream of Brimstone, doth kindle
 “it.”

“it *.” Yea, and it will for ever kindle it. The breath of the Lord will blow perpetually in a stream of sulphur, and keep it up in all its original fierceness of flaming. And they will have no rest, no respite from its tormenting fury; throughout the circling ages of Eternity. When a thousand years have gone over their heads, they shall seem to themselves to be just entering on their sufferings. And, when ten thousand times ten thousand have equally gone, they shall know themselves to be as distant as ever from the conclusion of their sorrows. Time cannot take off from the edge of them. They must for ever remember, that they might once have been happy, as happy as Imagination can conceive, or God himself could make them. And they must for ever feel, that they are now in the very extremity and bitterness of woe.

The deep desolations of their souls, therefore, must break from them in loud lamentations and in dreadful groans. All

Hell reounds with the melancholy cries.
And that Place of Horrors itself is even
made by them more horrible.

This, this then, is that scene of torments, which ye are so often called upon to avoid. And surely ye cannot be called upon too often. Ye cannot surely be pressed too much to escape such a dreadful and overwhelming ruin as this. And if any thing can rouse you from the Sleep of Sin, it must be such an opened view of terrour as the present. The stoutest breast of the careless among you, must feel dismay at the sight of it. And the bravest heart of the wicked, among you, must be ready to dissolve and melt away for fear.

Fear then; but with a godly fear. Heaven and Hell are before you. They Both invite your highest attention, and demand your decisive choice. The one calls to you in the language of joy, and in the notes of rapture, to come and be happy for ever. The other cries out to you in a
very

very different tone, in sounds of sadness, and in shrieks of horror; and bids you, oh! bids you, beware of coming to that gulph of torments. They Both unite in the same point of useful exhortation. Only Heaven lays fast hold upon your affections and hopes. And Hell lays still faster hold upon your apprehensions and terrors. The Voice of Heaven, therefore, may be neglected by the careless and the unthinking. But who, who can stop his ears to the Voice of Hell?—Try, thou Profligate, if thou canst.—Thou mayest try:—but thou canst not do it. Thy blood (I know) has been ready to curdle within thee, whilst the horrors of Hell have been laid bare before thee. Thou seest Hell opening her mouth wide to devour thee. Thou hearest her flames roaring aloud for thee. And thou art thrown into an agony of alarm, at the strong and lively impression on thy mind.

Oh! cherish the powerful feeling. Let it dwell upon thy heart. Let it hang upon thy

thy spirits. And let it compel thee to become religious in thy own defence.— Then will these terrors cease to brood in darkness over thy soul. Then will Hope, the gay daughter of religion, enlighten thy mind and enliven thy spirits. And those fears, which drove thee to take shelter in religion, will gradually soften down into a satisfaction in its commands, and into an enjoyment of its promises.— But, if neither the proffer of Heaven nor the threat of Hell can influence thee, Heaven will be taken from thee for thy punishment, and Hell will be assigned to thee for thy torment. Then that fear, which could not be worked upon to make thee happy, will be most effectually wrought upon to render thee miserable. And, in the striking language of the Book of Revelations, thou
“ shalt drink of the wine of the wrath of
“ God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation;
“ and thou shalt be tormented with fire
“ and brimstone—; and thou shalt have
“ no rest day nor night; and the smoke of thy

“thy torment shall ascend up for ever and
“ever *.”

Therefore to that GOD, who has kindly set
this horrible place before our eyes, in order
to keep us from falling into it, be all praise
for the kindness both now and evermore.

* xiv. 10—11.

F I N I S.



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